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The Disappearing Gold;

Or, Jack Spence, Detective-Reporter

By George T. Hargreaves

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CHAPTER I.

THE ASSIGNMENT.

TAKE it from me, kid, I was mighty glad to break away from that second-story assignment. No self-respecting reporter with a reputation for turning in "exclusives" wants to be stuck on a case for a month without turning up a "scoop." I did my best on it at that, too. Cut out the booze entirely and never soldiered an hour. But I simply couldn't uncover a single high spot.

At that I did no worse than the police and the private detectives who were turned loose. They didn't dig up anything worth while either. They studied the rogues' gallery and tried to locate every well-known crook out of jail, but all their work was just like diving up a blind alley. And with the papers and the public roasting them for the "crime wave," you can believe me, they tried hard enough.

It seemed as if we ought to have run down some of those second-story robberies, just the same. There was such a bunch of them. They started, you remember, with that haul up at Astorbilt's, when ten thousand in jewels was lugged off. It was plain enough how the thieves got in. The cops found an outside window on the second floor jimmied open.

But the puzzle was to know how they had got up to the window. It was easily twelve feet from the ground. Outside of it projected a little balcony—a sort of toy affair—hardly large enough to hold my two feet and they're not giant size either.

A drainpipe of iron ran up the mansion alongside the balcony, but after two or three of us had tried to climb it, and slipped and fallen when only a few feet off the ground, we decided that wasn't the way the window was reached.

The man that suggested a ladder was used—it wasn't me, for I ain't such a "boob" as all that—was scoffed at. The idea of a thief getting into a home on a prominent Fifth avenue corner in that way was too preposterous. Police were too numerous about there. So were other people.

Interest had died down—for who could write a "follow" story for six days when there wasn't anything following?—when in a week to a night came the robbery of the Morganthal home farther up the avenue. And would you believe it, the thieves got in there in the very same way. Second-story window jimmied. But there wasn't any balcony or drainpipe here. A flat stone wall led up to the window. How a thug ever got up to that one had us all buffaloed. But he did, and he got away with something like twelve thousand dollars' worth of pearls and diamonds besides. Then the police put plain-clothes men on the avenue until they were as thick as Jersey skeeters in the shank of summer.

And the thieves fooled them. In a week to a night they got busy again, but they shifted the scene across Central Park to West End avenue. This time they got into old Hiram Jenkins's home and carried off about ten thousand dollars' worth of jewelry and something like a thousand in gold and currency. And again it was through a second-story window they worked!

Say, the police were just about nutty by this time. And me? Say, I was just about ready to lick up a barrel of Perry's liquor in my disgust. We hunted pawnshops in search of some of the booty, but there was nary a trace. The cops ran in about a hundred suspects, but couldn't pin anything on any of them, though it's no lie to say they tried hard enough.

Then they threw a net of men up town that not even a fish could have swam through. And what do you suppose that second-story bunch did? They went away down town to Washington Square and got into the old-fashioned home of General Hiscock. Broke in there in the same old way, too. Jimmied a second-story window and carried off a lot of jewelry, more money, and a peck of gold medals that had been presented to the General. Altogether about eight thousand dollars' worth of loot. And on a Friday night again.

It wasn't so hard to guess how they'd got up to that window, because it was right over the old-style Colonial doorway, and any shifty fellow might have climbed up that and got at the window.

But it was a nifty man's job at that.

Well, you can imagine the excitement just about then. The police were fairly frothing at the mouth in rage. Anybody that had anything worth while in his home was carting it down to a safety deposit vault or sleeping with it between the bed mattresses. Burglar alarm manufacturers suddenly found themselves swamped with orders.

Forty thousand dollars' worth of stuff lugged off in four hauls, and not a clew as big as a mosquito's sting. I used to be ashamed to go in and report to the city editor at noon. He'd look at me with a sneer that'd make my hair raise. I'd go out with a vow to turn up something or jump into the East River, and I'd come in at midnight, report "nothing doing," and sit down and pound out a column of stuff all guff and bluff.

Then somebody remembered that two years before a series of burglaries almost identical with the present one had existed in the city. There had been four of them, they were all second-story jobs, everybody wondered how the windows had been reached, they'd all been done on a Friday, about forty thousand dollars in booty had been swiped, and there never was a clew uncovered as to the guys who did the job.

I got busy then and dug into the files of the Star, and discovered that four years before to the day—a Friday—a similar series of second-story jobs had started. There had been four of them, nobody could guess how the second-story windows had been reached, about forty thousand dollars in loot had been carried off, and the thieves got away without leaving a trace behind.

The coincidence was maddening. Every second year, four robberies in a row, every time on Friday night, a second-story window jimmied every time, and forty thousand dollars taken in each of the years, or a total of one hundred and twenty thousand dollars.

It was queer enough to make a fellow think that the stories were all a "plant," until you remembered that the houses robbed were all those of highly respectable people, who couldn't have been pushed into a scheme to make news, even with a hydraulic press.

Anyway, you can bet I was some glad when McCabe—you know McCabe, city editor of the Star, and as keen a guy for nosing news as this town has ever hived—called me in and called me off. I thought he was going to "can" me at first he was that peeved.

"Well, Spence," he said to me, sharply "your reputation as a ferret is all shot to pieces, isn't it?"

"Nobody's done any better on it," I blurted, for I don't like to be shown up any more than the next guy.

"Haven't turned up a new thing in four days now, have you?" he sneered, in that way that used to drive us out of the office, vowing to bring back a "scoop" or a resignation.

I could only shake my head and grin as if I had a dose of wormwood in my mouth.

Well, I'm going to try Jamieson on it for a few days to see what he can do," he said, shortly. I drew in my breath deeply, for I felt it was a cinch he was going to tell me I was through with the Star. I was trying to appear unconcerned at the blow, when he went on in a lower key voice:

"But I'm going to let you take an out-of-town assignment and see of you can't dig us up a good story or two on it."

I smiled at him in relief for I was five weeks behind in my room rent—but he batted me between the eyes again.

"And if you don't turn in something worth while, kid," he shook his head of busy gray hair warningly—"I'll conclude you've gone stale and lay you off to rest up."

"Lead me to it, Mac," I promised, rashly, "and if I can't deliver the goods, the only copy I'll send will be my resignation."

"Well, it's like this: We've got a gink of a correspondent out here at Bellrose on Long Island, who's been telling us he's got a great mystery story, but it's too big for him to handle. Says he'll help any staff man we send out, but he doesn't know how to tackle the thing all alone."

McCabe paused to light a cigarette and take a couple of mighty whiffs.

"You know how strong the big boss is for mystery stories," he went on. "Well, if you can dish this one up right, he'll likely forgive you for falling down on the second-story cases."

"Where's Bellrose?" I butted in, anxious to see what kind of a tough proposition I was headed against.

"About twenty miles out from the city on the Long Island Railroad. Only a hundred or so houses in the place, and those mostly occupied by mushroom millionaires. The correspondent—Frisbie's his name—says there's a queer old guy out there who claims to have been robbed of four or five thousand dollars—all in cash."

"Nothing so blamed interesting in that," I suggested, disappointedly.

"But listen, kid, listen," McCabe swung his head and scowled his brow. "Let me get to the high spots. This money has been disappearing a thousand dollars at a time. There's been four times, I understand, and each time has been on a Saturday night."

"House broken into?" I interjected.

"That's the strange thing about it," explained the city editor. "The house apparently has not been broken into. And besides, the old man has made no complaint to the police out there. Trying to catch the thief himself, I imagine. This stuff about the robbery comes from his daughter, who's the only other occupant of his home. She told about it to the grocer, and the grocer told the constable, and the constable told Frisbie. Sounds better now, doesn't it?"

"Nothing been printed about it yet?"

"Not a peep. I told Frisbie if he kept it for us and it yielded a story, I'd give him a bonus. Oh, yes, I forget to tell you about this old guy. Name's Hawthorne. Seems to have lots of dough, but lives like a hermit. Appears to live only for his daughter, but keeps her mighty close. Won't have anything to do with the neighbors, and scowls when anybody tries to speak to him. Mighty picturesque old character. Worth a good feature story, anyway, even if you don't solve the mystery in the robbery."

"Hawthorne, eh?" I stuck the name back in my head. "When's the next train start for Bellrose?"

"At three-thirty. You can get out there in less than an hour and have time to look around and get back in time to put the story over tonight. We've shy on stuff for tomorrow morning."

"Better give me an order for a ten-spot for expenses," I volunteered.

"I'll make it five," he said, and he did. He was always tight about expense money.

"And now, mind you, Jack, don't give us any yellow stuff," he warned me, as he handed over the order. "Stick to facts."

Say, the facts I got were enough to turn the yellowest yarn ever put across a sickly green.

CHAPTER II.

THE HERMIT AND HIS HOUSE.

You can gamble I was glad I'd got my heavy ulster out of hock, for when I got down from the train at Bellrose shortly after four o'clock that afternoon, I needed it to keep out the young blizzard that was rising. About four inches of snow coated the ground, and the wind that came out of the north and swooped down from the top of the long hill under which the little town squatted just about bored clean through my marrow.

I looked up the correspondent Frisbie right off the reel. He kept business in a little eight by ten office. On one side of him was the grocery and on the other the postoffice. If he hadn't been so well protected, that wind would have blown his shack galley west.

There was still light enough for me to read the signs on his window. He was an attorney-at-law most of all. Anyway, that was in the biggest letters. Then he was a real estate agent, a justice of the peace and a lender of money—other people's. Likewise he was a lumber dealer and took orders for wood and coal. Maybe he was other things, too. I don't know. I got tired of reading the signs.

He was trying to keep warm over a little wood stove when I pushed in. His thin yellow hair drooped over his wrinkled forehead. His thin blue eyes looked as cold as the blue hands he was nervously rubbing together. His thin frame just about seemed ready to shake out of the threadbare hand-me-down he wore. He looked to need a square meal worse than anything else in the world.

"Your name Frisbie?" I started in.

He nodded in a noncommittal sort of way as if he was afraid I was a bill collector.

"My name's Spence. I'm from the Star," I wished him. "McCabe sent me down on that hermit robbery you've been tipping him off."

He grinned and came forward rubbing his hands faster than ever. He looked at me out of his watery eyes as if I was the ninth wonder.

"So you're a New York reporter, eh?" he stammered. "Some job, eh?"

I was going to hand him one of my stiff uppercuts from the point of my tongue when I tumbled that the poor guy was kowtowing to me as a superior personage. Rather made me swell up when I compared the way he went at me with the cold feet I had to coddle in town.

"Oh, not so much," I assured him, with a proud toss of the head, as they say in the play. "What do you know about this robbery?"

"Well, did you bring the bonus along?" he asked expectantly. "Mr. McCabe promised it, you know."

"You'll get the bonus, boss, if I get the story. The Star used to pay for hot air. But you've got to have the goods now-adays."

"That's too bad." He shook his head and his jaw sagged. "I need that coin mighty bad."

"Thirsty, eh?" I grinned, as I dived a hand into my trousers pocket and drew out a half-dollar. "Well, I feel that way myself sometimes. Here, take this on account," and I dropped the piece into his chilly hand.

"Thanks. I'll be back in a minute," he smiled and ducked out. I watched him cross the street to the pharmacy and disappear behind the prescription counter in the rear. I had hardly time to glance up and down the main thoroughfare of Bellrose, tenanted now by but a single farmer's wagon drawn up in front of the grocery, before Frisbie was returning. One hand was held tight in a pocket, the other, cupped, he was drawing over his mouth.

My sense of smell always was acute—especially for liquor. Pooh Bah hadn't any sooner closed the door behind him again than I knew he'd used my money for whisky. It was on his breath and in the bottle he clutched in his pocket.

I wasn't sorry, for the drink appeared to have braced up those watery eyes of his, and to have pushed some color into his pallid cheeks. He'd got on my nerves before. He looked so much like a cold-storage fish. It was easy now getting him started to tell what he said he knew.

"Yes, there's been four of these robberies up at the Hawthorne place," he began, moistening his lips. Maybe it was because he liked the story, but more likely it was because he liked the liquor. "I heard of the first one about two weeks ago. It was two weeks old then. They come a week apart and always on Saturday night."

"How'd you come to hear of them?"

"Well, Miss Hawthorne—that's the old man's daughter—comes down once in a while to buy a few groceries. She told the grocer's boy—that's Jimmy Sykes—he tells his boss, his boss tells Bud Hyson, deputy sheriff here, and Hyson tells me."

"And just what did this Miss—Miss Hawthorne say?"

"Said father was terribly upset, sick because some of his money had been carried off."

"How much?"

"Four times and each time a thousand dollars. Appeared to Jimmy, though she didn't exactly say so, that the money was tied up in bags holding just that much apiece."

"No idea how it was done?"

"Ah, there's the real Sherlock Holmes mystery about it," warned the correspondent. "House wasn't broken into. Not a thing taken except the money. Not another thing disturbed. No doors unlocked. No windows opened. Some puzzle, eh?"

"Who lives in the Hawthorne home?" I quizzed, noncommittally. I wasn't going to let a jay like this think I was tangled. I kind of liked that glamour he had pushed around me.

"Only two—father and daughter."

"No servants or help?"

"A woman one day a week to do a little cleaning. That's all."

"Who's she?" I shot at him so sharply that he blinked.

"Oh, you needn't suspect her," he assured me. "She hasn't got sense enough for such a job. She's just an ignorant Polish woman. Can't speak twenty words of English."

"How do you know that?" I blurted.

"Why, why, she works for Mrs. Frisbie once in a while," he explained.

"How old's the old man?" I kept on, hopefully.

"About fifty, I should say. But he's mighty wrinkled and looks a blamed sight older some days."

"You see him every day then?"

"Oh, no, scarcely once a week. He keeps an auto up to his place—regular crank about them, it seems, for he has a new one nearly every year—and he comes down here to buy some supplies. Takes them home himself. Doesn't seem to want delivery boys or any one else around his house. Never saw him without a grouch. He's as stingy with his words as he is with his money."

"How do you know he's got money?"

"Great scot, man, didn't he pay fifteen thousand for the place he's got up there and hasn't he a fine auto, and don't he feed well? I know the price of the place, because I sold it to him myself. I can see his machine is in the four-thousand dollar class, and as for his feed, well, just go next door and ask Jimmy Sykes if old Hawthorne doesn't buy the best stuff he's got and then kick because it isn't better."

"How long has he lived here?"

"About ten years. It was the new Apgar house he bought. Apgar had lived in it only a couple of years. When his wife died up there, he wouldn't stay any longer. Sold it for a good deal less than it cost him. Hawthorne got a big bargain. It's a peach of a place if it was kept up."

"Hawthorne doesn't keep it up, eh?"

"Naw, it's a shame tae way he lets the place drag. Only seems to think of keeping his little garage up. Say, I don't believe the sunlight ever gets into that house now. Big green blinds always closed. Doors always locked. A regular tomb. No wonder the daughter looks white."

"How old is she?"

"You've got me there," grinned Frisbie, scratching his head. "She might be twenty and she might be thirty."

"Good-looking?"

"A beauty, but her eyes always look kind of frightened."

"What business is the old man in?"

"Business?" snickered the correspondent. "I haven't seen him do a stroke of work except putter about his auto and fuss around the house since he moved out here."

"Where did he come from?"

"Never been able to find out. Only gets about a letter a month in the postoffice here, and that's always postmarked from the city. Can't tell whether it's from a man or a woman, because the address is always typewritten."

Which made me think that Uncle Sam isn't as secretive about the mail he carries as he's supposed to be.

"What does he use the auto for?"

Frisbie looked at me as if he sought to learn whether or not I had an occult purpose in asking the question.

"Why, to ride in, of course."

"Runs it himself?"

"Always."

"Ride much?"

"Funny thing; mostly at night."

"Where?"

Frisbie shrugged his shoulders and gripped the bottle in his pocket anew.

"Ere you ever been inside his house?"

"Only once since he's lived up there. That was when we were getting subscriptions to have the roads oiled. He let me in as far as the hall, but he turned me out mighty quick, too. I don't know anybody around here that's got even as far as the hall."

"How does the house look inside?"

"From what I could see, pretty good. He's got a lot of fine furniture and a heap of pictures on the walls."

"And he's never complained to any one here about this series of robberies?"

"Not to a single soul," affirmed Frisbie, shaking his head vigorously. "And Bud Hyson—that's the deputy sheriff here—is such a stubborn brute that he wouldn't go up and ask him about the robberies till the old man had made a complaint. And the old man never has. So Hyson thinks there was nothing in what the girl said."

The village Pooh Bah pointed out the Hawthorne place to me. I could see the white sides of the house peeking out through the tall pines. I guess I shivered as I stood looking up the bleak side road stretching with its unbroken covering of deepening snow up the hill. He must have thought I was scared for, as he stood huddled in his doorway, he chattered:

"I'll go up there with you if you like."

"Naw, you keep warm down here," I grinned back at him.

And he tried to, for he had barely closed the door behind me, when, glancing back, I saw him tipping his bottle of liquor to his blue lips.

CHAPTER III.

THE FORBIDDING EYES.

I'm no coward if I do say it myself. I've been in as tight places as it's possible to get and stay on this side of kingdom come, and I've never squealed yet.

You remember when I helped the cops chase the "Red Hank" gang after they'd killed plain-clothes Blakesley? "Hank" cornered me in an alley and pushed his gun against my head. Say, I can remember yet how I thought it was a rotten way to die. I recollected, too, that Dick Cyphers had promised to pay me a ten-dollar poker debt that same night. Dick was rotten pay. But I laughed out loud and so flustered "Hank" that he turned around to see what I was cackling at. I didn't do a thing then but smash his gun out of his hand. Then it was easy to get the bracelets on him.

But I'll be blamed if, as I looked up the long, cold road toward that house of mystery on the hill, I didn't feel something creep down my spine. Afraid? Not on your life. A fellow can't stay in this business and afford to be afraid. No, that creepy feeling was nothing but a hunch. I get them occasionally, and when I act on them I manage to keep out of trouble. But when I don't, I certainly do get mauled.

I dropped in on Jimmy Sykes, the grocer's boy, before starting up the hill. Jimmy was busy rattling a scuttle of coal into the stove. A pair of quick, shrewd eyes made him look the likely kid.

I asked him if he knew Miss Hawthorne. He grinned an affirmative. Had she told him about some robberies up at her home? He grinned more broadly. How much did she say had been taken? He wrinkled his forehead and tapped his temple significantly.

I felt my hopes of a good story dissolve. I knew instantly what the boy meant by that tapping of his head—Miss Hawthorne was off her nut—crazy. Those robbery stories were just outcroppings of her unbalanced mind. I was hot at Frisbie for bringing me out in this blizzard on such a booby house hunt.

"But, say," the grocer's boy exclaimed as he set down the emptied coal scuttle, "she's a peach of a looker."

Between you and me, it was that "peach of a looker" that sent me up the cold, wind-swept road to the Hawthorne home. I'm something of a connoisseur in female beauty. If she could strike a green grocer's kid that strong, I decided, she ought to be worth looking over.

Dusk was settling when I entered the side road that led up to the hermit's house. I had to break my own path through the snow that now covered the ground to the depth of nearly a foot. Not even a vehicle had marked its way through the virgin fall.

That half-mile was the longest I ever walked. The biting wind fastened its teeth into my ears and cheeks until they were nigh without feeling. My feet felt like chunks of ice. The effort in dragging them through the deep snow set me in an uncomfortable pant. It never did agree with me to work that hard.

But I reached the front of the house finally. It looked colder and more for-

(Continued on page nine.)

A Mock Marriage;

Or, LOVE'S IDIOSYNCRASIES

By Ella Martin

"Let me judge as to whether the case is hopeless."

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CHAPTER IV.

THE BALL.

THE night of the ball at the Alden mansion came at last. Much had taken place since the brother and sister sat in the library together two weeks agone, while the latter confessed her two-sided nature, and the dual life she had been leading because of it.

Fern had never betrayed the fact that she understood the message tapped on the window-pane; but she had given her brother to understand that she did not need his assistance until after the ball was over. Then the errand she had for him that would take him away from home would be explained to him.

The decorators had been busy all day, and the rooms were gorgeous with blooming plants, cut flowers, and feathery ferns. In the ballroom the orchestra was entirely hidden behind banks of flowers and evergreens, that the dancers might glide over the polished floor to strains of music from invisible instruments.

Two of Fern's intimate friends helped receive the guests as they arrived. Both were married women who did a great deal of entertaining, and to these she introduced Mrs. Bennett and her daughters. All the others were known to them. Nearly all the large number of guests had arrived when the Bennetts made their appearance. There was a murmur of admiration at sight of the two girls by those who had not met them before. Glen stood at a distance endeavoring to get a glimpse of Gloria as she entered. He was curious, it is true, to see her sister who was to be his bride, but his heart fluttered at once more beholding the glorious creature who was denied him. From his position he saw the girls enter the room with their mother, saw them introduced, and watched them pass on and mingle with the crowd in the spacious drawingrooms, while others took their place.

He was in a daze of admiration, and hardly saw any one distinctly, but later, while his gaze was traveling over the rooms in search of her sister, he saw Lillith Bennett standing apart, tall and slender, her gold-crowned head held high. The shoulders showing above the billowy, white gown—a Parisian creation, were like tinted alabaster; and the arms, bare and smooth, were perfect in contour. The violet eyes he had heard so much about, were all claimed for them—large, deep and expressive. His heart gave a little thrill and a feeling of satisfaction came to his suddenly. She was indeed a woman he might be proud of, and since she was to be his bride he was glad that it was so.

If he had never seen her sister, Gloria, he thought, his father's desire would not be so hard to fulfil, for at that moment she seemed a being almost divine. But he was forced to remember that she was human enough to be willing to barter her hand in marriage for a worldly position, and his heart hardened against her.

Gloria, in a gown of rose-colored silk, under a cloud of black chiffon, her arms and shoulders ivory-like in their whiteness, and diamonds in her purplish-black hair, was indeed a glorious vision. Her black eyes, limpid and deep, brought many a society-seasoned man to her side. Her bearing was regal. And not one of the fashionable set who gathered in the stately mansions on Michigan avenue on occasions like this could manage a train with the grace and ease of this young lady, new to the ways of the social world. Gloria Bennett was at her best when crossing a room, where gracefulness or the lack if it are equally in evidence. Her sister Lillith was a trifle more shy, though it was a timidity devoid of self-consciousness. But because of her reserve of manner she sought out a secluded niche where she sat by herself until Fern, with her brother in tow, ferreted her out. After the introduction Fern said smilingly:

"He has seen you from afar, and believes you are 'wasting your sweetness on the desert air;' and man-like he is jealous of the air."

Lillith lifted her wondrous violet eyes and laughed softly.

"I was enjoying myself watching the crowd," she said, "but of course I am pleased to meet your brother. I have heard mamma speak of him."

But for that last sentence Glen would have forgotten all but the beauty and womanliness of the girl. She was certainly new to the art of dissembling, he thought. It never occurred to him that the young lady might be ignorant of her mother's scheming. If that were the case, her remark was unfortunate, for it called to mind the distasteful subject at a critical moment.

"May I have a seat in your cozy corner?" he asked, for he felt he must be about his wooing. "Most of the people are in the ballroom. And after a while when we are tired of flirting, perhaps you will grant me the favor of a waltz?"

"Oh, I don't intend to flirt the least little bit!" she cried, laughing musically. "But I will waltz with you, if you like."

"Neither shall I flirt, then," replied Glen, seriously. "I shall be in dead earnest. Run away, Fern, till we come to an understanding."

Fern looked a little surprised, but partly understood the reckless feeling that gave him courage to dive at once into the courtship he knew was inevitable. She had seen him dancing with Gloria a few minutes before, and his face had been white and set, as if his feelings were under restraint. But now he was eager and smiling, and an artificial lightness of spirits was manifest to his sister, who was behind the scenes concerning his desires.

"I was about to ask you to excuse me," she returned. "I must go back to my guests. I had no idea you were so eager to be rid of me. He is a strange being, Miss Bennett, so don't be surprised at anything he says or does." And with a little nod, and a wave of her hand she was gone, the train of her lavender ball gown sweeping gracefully behind her.

"How beautiful your sister is!" Lillith said, admiringly, her head inclined slightly forward, her glowing eyes following the rounded figure till it was lost to view among the group at the ballroom door. "How proud of her you must be."

"She has no peer, unless—well, there are two here tonight who equal her in beauty and charm—your sister and yourself."

He glanced at her covertly, expecting her to become confused at the compliment; but instead of the blush of one unused to compliments she gave him a surprised look, and her gaze never faltered.

"It is good of you to say so," she replied, in a tone that showed she did not doubt his sincerity, "but I am afraid you are too generous."

The unabashed, unaffected answer pleased him. But was she really unsophisticated, or simply more society-worn than he was led to believe?

"Shall we go to the ballroom now?" he asked. And she rose and placed her hand upon his arm.

Fern saw them when they entered, and thought what a handsome couple they were. Gloria saw them, and for a moment the color left her cheeks. Mrs. Bennett, who had given Glen her soft, white hand in greeting earlier in the evening, watched them narrowly. They had both been given to understand that a match between them was desirable, and she was anxious to know whether the idea was agreeable to them. To all appearances neither was giving the matter a thought, which was encouraging, from her point of view; for it denoted that they were too deeply absorbed in each other to remember why they were brought together. And Mrs. Bennett was satisfied.

Gloria's eyes followed her sister and the man who could set her own heart-strings to vibrating, as they glided away over the polished floor and were lost to her gaze by intervening couples obscuring her view of them. The throb of the music hurt her. There is something about waltz music that is saddening in its effects, and this one from Strauss was particularly so. There was a mist in her starry eyes when the two again came into view, but she could see that Glen was looking into the violet eyes shyly raised to his, and that there was a beautiful flush on Lillith's cheeks. They were, to all appearances, completely absorbed in each other.

Well, that was as it should be, since they were to wed, and so soon, too. How had it come about, Gloria wondered? She knew only what little her mother had told her—that she and her girlhood's friend were to match their children for old time's sake. Why, if they had so much regard for old times, did they not wed each other, and leave the young people free to follow their own desires? Still, if she could believe her eyes, it was a case of love at first sight between her sister and Glen Alden. And it was not so strange, after all, for both were young and handsome.

Mr. Alden had been in evidence during the early part of the evening, but had retired to reappear at supper time. It was a sumptuous feast, provided by the best caterers in the city, and was partaken of amid merry laughter and wit as sparkling as the wine.

There was amid this throng of elegant people no one more conventional in conduct than Fern Alden, whose other self was so thoroughly Bohemian. When the reaction took place in her dual nature, after so much pomp and display, would she go back to the club, where everything was free and easy, even hilarious? Not if she had read aright the message tapped on the window-pane. There would be too great a risk. There were others belonging to the Bohemian club among this merry but refined gathering, but the majority did not even dream of its existence. These fellow-members of Fern's wore no badges, but they used their secret signs of salutation right under the eyes of the outsiders and were not detected.

After the supper the guests wandered about the rooms and conservatories and out upon the lawn for a while; then the younger set returned to the strenuous pleasure of dancing. But soon some one proposed a visit to a fortune-teller on another street. No one had heard of the old fortune-teller, save Helen Bliss, the young lady who proposed the visit, but as soon as informed of her existence the young folks were anxious to make her a call. Later, when carriages were ready to take them to the number given Helen could not be found.

After the departure of a number of her guests Fern found herself free from her duties as hostess for a time, and began to look about her for Helen Bliss. "Helen of Troy" the "Jolly Girls" called her, satirically, because she was the plainest-featured of them all. She was not to be found, and no one had seen her since the visit to the fortune-teller was mentioned.

"Strange!" Fern murmured. "She has taken leave of none of us, she must be about somewhere. I must see her, and find out if she knows who did the tapping on the window. I must know why I received that message."

A few sentences only are necessary to describe Helen of Troy, otherwise Helen Bliss, whom we will meet with often enough in this story. She was a medium-sized, flaxen-haired, gray-eyed young lady, not ill-looking, but with no special claim to beauty. This fact was a thorn in the flesh of this over-sensitive girl. She was well aware of her insignificant looks and allowed her mind to dwell upon the fact that not one of her associates had been so unfortunate as herself in this respect. Except for this coveted personal beauty, Helen Bliss had everything heart could wish. She was wealthy, of good family, and welcomed everywhere. And in secret she was a member of the extremely informal club called the Jolly Girls. It was this same Helen of Troy who had been instrumental in bringing about the pseudo-wedding between Fern Alden and a member of the Jolly Boys' Club. In fact, it was Helen who had first introduced the masculine element into the society, and if there was any lark of prank indulged in that was unparalleled in its daring, it was Helen who thought it out and planned its execution. She was the life of the gathering, always, and her small-featured face was a pleasant sight, even to those who thought it plain. If she had only been content with her looks she would have been the most popular one of their number.

But unknown to the others she brooded over the unkindness of Fate. And partly from jealousy of the other girls, and partly from a spirit of mischief, she invented a new way of making things lively for the members of both clubs—a way unthought of before, and unparalleled in conception and daring in execution. Her associates were yet to learn to what lengths this enterprising young lady could go.

Finding that Helen was not in the house Fern went into the conservatory. There were numerous couples wandering about, seeking a chance to be by themselves for a few minutes tender conversation, but the guests were too numerous for many such opportunities. She paused at last in the shelter of a large palm and scanned the place. Suddenly she started at a well-known voice close beside her. A tall and very handsome man stood at her side.

"Max—Mr. Folsom!" she gasped in surprise. Then she gave him her hand quite

The voice of "Helen of Troy."

calmly. "I didn't know you were here. I haven't seen you before."

She dropped her eyes after that first shy glance, and the color came and went in her cheeks.

"I am a late arrival," he said. "I was not in the city in time to come when I should, so I came when I could."

"You are welcome at any time."

"I hoped so. At any rate, I wanted to see you. Come into the open air, the rooms are warm. What a crush you have here tonight."

"I think it rather cool here in the conservatory," she said, reluctant to leave the restraining presence of the others.

"There is no privacy here, and I have something to say to you that concerns no one but ourselves. Come, you will not be missed for a while."

She put her hand upon his arm, with a little tremulous feeling. They went down the aisle between the long rows of plants together, and out onto the moon-lighted veranda. She was speechless and reluctant, but he did not pause until they had reached the shadow of the shrubbery. Then he turned and took her in his arms.

"Max!" she breathed, in a startled manner, and struggled from his embrace. "You said you wished to speak to me."

"And so I do. There is plenty of time yet, isn't there?"

"But you have no right to—to——"

"Well, then, why haven't I? I have asked for the right often enough. And it is to ask it for the last time that I have brought you here. I want your answer tonight. You must tell me why, loving me as you do, you cannot, or will not, consent to name the day."

"How do you know that I love you?" she asked, but her voice faltered.

"By my own love for you, I know it. No one is ever ignorant of it when love is mutual. You knew of my love before I declared it, and I knew it was reciprocated. Now, what is your object in pretending otherwise? What is it that stands between us? Tell me; it may be only an imaginary barrier."

Fern hesitated. Should she tell him of that madcap escapade at the Jolly Girls' Club? No, he would turn from her in disgust. And yet she could not wed him with the secret untold. He did not see that her slim hands were tightly clasped because of her agitation.

"We must come to an understanding tonight, or part, forever," he said, decisively.

"Why?" she asked, a little startled; for though she could not give him any encouragement, she did not want the parting to be final. She could not lose him entirely. "Wait," she added, "I am not ready to decide yet. I am not sure of—of some things, I want more time. If I answer you now it must be in the negative. It must be so—I cannot tell you why. But I cannot give my final answer tonight."

"There is no accounting for a woman's caprice," he said. "How much time do you require? I am going away soon, I should like to know before then; for if you refuse me I shall never return."

The color left her cheeks in one swift rush, but her face was averted, and he did not note her agitation.

"Going away!" she echoed in a faint whisper. "Why need you go?"

"I have business that will take me to the Adirondack Mountains. The old gypsy fortune-teller has advised me that I shall learn all I wish to know if I spend a few weeks at St. Hubert's Inn on Keene Heights. So I shall combine business with pleasure and prove if the gypsy's prediction be false or true."

Fern nearly cried out in alarm! If he went to Keene Valley he might learn the very thing she was keeping from him! And more—more even than she knew herself. It was there that Glen was going, also for information. They were sure to meet. What should she do? Confess and end it all? If she had done so this story would never have been written, or else told with Fern Alden's part in it left out. It would have ended matters for them, right there and then, in a way little dreamed of by either.

Max Folsom looked down at the bowed head—he could not see the averted face. His voice trembled when he spoke:

"I shall not care to return to Chicago if you reject my suit. Tell me what stands between us, and let me judge as to whether the case is hopeless."

"I cannot!"

He was piqued, but not hopelessly offended, nor yet despairing, for he believed he had won her heart. He lingered for a moment, then turned and stood surveying the garden, the sky, with its deep-blue depths and myriad of twinkling stars, and the great stone residence looming up in the moonlight before him. Then he held out his hand.

"Good-by," he said, "and God bless you!"

He left her then, without another word or backward glance—left her standing alone in the shadow of the evergreens—and without entering the house, went down a graveled path to a side exit and disappeared from her sight. Fern threw herself into one of the garden seats and covered her face with her hands.

"Oh, if I had only told him all! He might have found some way out of it! But no! I could never confess my folly to him. He would scorn me for my weakness, and I would never see him again."

And so she let him go out of her sight feeling that perhaps it was also out of her life forever. She went back to her guests, and soon after the others returned and were called upon to give an account of their visit to the gypsy's abode. But with merry laughter and jests they evaded relating even in part, what had been revealed to them concerning the future.

"It will break the charm," they said; "one of the main things is never to tell. You must all go and learn what your own fate is to be."

The dancing had begun again by this time and the subject was dropped. But Fern made a secret resolution to visit the fortune-teller in the near future. Whom else was there to consult, if Glen failed in his efforts to aid her? On looking around in search of her brother, she beheld him waltzing with Gloria Bennett, and she watched him closely. The light of first, passionate love was on his face. He was gazing into the girl's upturned eyes, and neither seemed conscious of the presence of others. There were just they two in all the world, apparently. The waltz-music was sweet and sad and throbbing. To Fern it was like so many throbs of pain. She watched the two glide down the long room together, and then she turned to go away, her heart beating in unison with the music. Not one waltz had she had with Max Folsom, and he had gone, perhaps forever.

It was late now, and the guests began to take their departure. It was then Fern found that, contrary to her supposition, Helen Bliss was still among them.

"I was under the impression that you had gone home, Helen," she said. "I missed you directly after the visit to the fortune-teller was mentioned. I wanted so much to speak to you, but I shall have to postpone the interview I sought."

"I was at the gypsy's with the rest of them," laughed Helen. "Or rather just before them. None of the others knew I was there. I am not so afraid my fortune won't come true if I tell. And so—whom do you think I am destined to marry? I, the ugly duckling, am to wed the handsomest man in our set, so she declared. She read it from my palm."

"And his name?" Fern queried. She had a premonition of what the answer would be; but she started visibly when it came.

"None other than Max Folsom."

"Is it too early to accept my congratulations?" Fern asked, with a smile. But Helen detected, or imagined she did, a note of sarcasm in the tone, and suppressed a giggle of merriment.

"You ought to go to her yourself," Helen advised, without replying. "She might be able to interpret the message you received at the library window one night."

"That is what I wanted to see you about, Helen!" cried Fern. But "Helen of Troy" had darted away and mingled with the now departing guests. That was her only leave-taking.

A sort time later the great house was silent. The last carriage had rolled away, and at least one heart was aching after the ball.

CHAPTER V.
THE WEDDING.

In one of the principal churches of the city a wedding was taking place. It was that of Lillith Bennett and Glen Alden. It had come to that. The wooing had been short but effective. Glen wanted to get it over with that he might hasten away to other scenes, and Lillith had yielded to her mother's persuasion.

The affair was an elaborate one, partaking of all the pomp and show the average bride delights in. And the occasion furnished one more opportunity for the Bennetts to edge their way into the world of fashion and lay others open to social obligations. From this charge we must acquit all but the mother. Lillith cared only for the love and esteem of the man she had consented to wed. Intuition warned her that there was some reservation—that he was not giving her affection—and it made her unnaturally reticent. All this display and grandeur was new to her, and she was shy and retiring—just as a bride should be, though she had given her appearance no thought.

Taking his bride at once to his father's great stone mansion, Glen Alden broke to her as gently as he could the fact that he was obliged to leave at once for an indefinite period of time. He explained that a matter of business called him away, which could not be delayed, but he expressed no regrets at leaving his wife directly after the ceremony was over, and spoke of his going away in a matter-of-fact tone that stunned and, unconcerned that it struck a chill to Lillith's heart. She had not dreamed of anything like this.

They were in the drawingroom, alone together for the first time since the ceremony that had made them one. She listened quietly, then turned her great violet eyes upon him; but the question they contained was presented to him in no other way, for her lips spoke no words. Slowly the light died from her face, and she turned away that he might not notice the gray pallor that she felt creeping over it.

It was later, when his father and sister were present, that he bade her good-by. She kept her feelings well under control until he was gone. Even then she let no one see that the iron had entered her soul. He had not married her for love—she understood that now. Then why had he made her his wife? A deserted bride—deserted almost at the altar—she yet shed no tears when she went that night to her bridal couch alone.

And it was for this she had married a man of her mother's choosing? For this she had allowed herself to be persuaded into forfeiting her girlhood—the carefree existence to which she could never return!

Meanwhile, Glen Alden, the thoughtless bridegroom, was speeding away on an east-bound train. His conscience was not troubling him much. Lillith Bennett had not married for love any more than he had, he told himself, by way of excuse for his conduct. She had not even asked him to stay, or expressed surprise at his going. She had not demanded to know when he would return. And it was easy to carry out his plans of remaining away permanently under such conditions. How little Glen understood the feminine heart!

After a while he began more fully to realize that the train was fast bearing him away from the city and his newmade bride, and he fell to thinking of her delicate loveliness. How beautiful she was standing there with his father and sister, the new mistress of the Alden mansion. He had taken his leave of them in the hall, and she looked to be a part of the family group. He never doubted that she was satisfied, and would remain and fill the position her marriage with him had given her creditably. Her ambitions were realized—what more could she desire?

But dwelling on thoughts of the home he had left, for he knew now how long, gave rise to a feeling of loneliness that would not away. He was forced through gallantry to shut his mind to the thought that he had been crowded out of his home, that he had given his place in it to another instead of bringing that other to share it with him. He had merely stepped out that one who coveted it and the advantages that went with it might enjoy them unhampered by his presence. He could have felt very bitter if he had permitted his thoughts to run in this channel.

He did not regret his exile, exactly, for his soul revolted against the emptiness of the life he had been leading. Still, if it had not been for the fact that he had met Gloria before he made the acquaintance of the woman destined to bear his name, it might have ended differently. Lillith had been thrust upon him, and the thought was obnoxious to him. He believed it was to his credit that he had not lingered by her side, feeling as he did toward her sister. And his one aim was that Gloria should never guess of the passion she had awakened within him. For he believed he might have won her heart, and for her own sake he had treated her with indifference ever since the night of the ball.

Now as he sought his berth, he imagined her lustrous black eyes were following him, a reproachful expression in their depths. He took those wonderful orbs into dreamland with him. He forgot the sweet violet eyes that at this very moment, for aught he knew to the contrary, might be drowned in tears.

When morning dawned, bride and bridegroom were far apart. Glen, after breakfast in the dining car, took out the note book his sister had given him to study its contents and familiarize himself with her wishes. When he learned what was required of him he felt an eagerness to be about his sister's business. It involved a delicate handling of some work in the detective line, a kind of employment he had a hankering for. Besides, he must help to extricate her from the entanglement into which her misguided conduct had plunged her.

"Poor Fern," he murmured fondly, "she has not had a mother's love and guidance during the years of her adolescence."

For his father's as well as his sister's sake he hoped to help her out of her dilemma in a way to avoid a scandal. If her suspicions were true—suspicions based on information given her by a member of her club, the affair could be straightened out without publicity. If it proved to be but a myth he was following, then there was nothing left but a legal annulment of a marriage that after all was not a marriage, and yet precluded another union for either of its participants. And if any legal proceedings were necessary the press was sure to get hold of it. For now that this particular locality was in the limelight—having furnished material for the newspapers' news-stories, that were in most cases more sensational than creditable—his mind was haunted with visions of reporters the moment he realized there was a flaw or criticism in the conduct of one of his own kin.

Glen was blind to the fact that his own unheard-of conduct would shortly occasion comment, and cause enough there was for remark. For the first thing this abandoned bride did the morning after the wedding was to go home to her mother. She had spent the evening in fearless resentment, the night in fitful slumber.

Her chamber was spacious, the great house lonely, and every sound in the silence of the night startled her. She felt Glen's desertion of her as an indignity put upon her, and she resented it with all her heart. What would the world say? She knew now he did not love her, but she would show him she did not care.

And so in the morning, at the very time Glen was planning to keep secret, if possible, his sister's affairs, Lillith left her husband's roof and returned to her mother's house. She had risen early, before any of the family were astir, ordered a taxicab, and took her departure without one word of explanation. The situation explained itself. The could hardly expect her to act differently.

Mrs. Bennett and Gloria, not understanding her return, uttered exclamations of surprise on beholding her at so early an hour. And her defiant air and flashing eyes told a story of their own.

"What has happened, Lillith? Speak!" her mother cried.

Lillith Alden stood silent in the wide doorway of the room, and gazed for a moment at her mother and sister, her beautiful face ashen in its pallor, and the fire of an outraged pride burning in her eyes. Mrs. Bennett did not like the look on her daughter's face.

"Lillith," she said, excitedly, "I demand to know what this means!"

"Only this mother," Lillith answered, in a voice low and even, "only that the husband you chose for me has deserted me. I have left the Alden home never to return. I loved him, or even you could not have persuaded me to marry him. But now—after his treatment of me—I would not forgive him if he asked it on his knees at my feet!"

"Hush! Hush, Lillith, and tell me all! Why has he deserted you? There may be some extenuating circumstances. What explanation did he make?"

"Scarcely any. He merely told me, in an indifferent way, that he must leave immediately on a matter of business, that it was uncertain when he would return, but that he hoped I would be happy with his father and sister. Think of it! What will the set you have managed to get us introduced to through the medium of these people think, when they see me cast aside in this manner—deserted without cause or explanation directly the marriage ceremony was over?"

She paused, her anger mastering her utterance. Her feelings were stirred to their depths.

"Oh, the humiliation of it!" she cried, when she had conquered her agitation enough to continue. "How can I ever face people and know they are wondering why my husband" (with a sarcastic accent) "is taking his wedding journey alone!"

She paused for lack of breath to go on, and threw herself onto a couch. But she sprang to her feet against almost immediately.

"There is one thing," she cried, passionately, "I must ask of you and Gloria—and that is never to mention his name to me! I hate him!"

It was then that Gloria spoke, standing erect and defiant before them both.

"And I love him!" she cried. "I love him in spite of what he has done, or of what any one may think of it. And I shall love him all my life. But it is too late, now. I would not marry a man who had once been my sister's husband."

"My husband!" Lillith said in bitter scorn. "I disown him. Not in any sense of the word is he my husband. The marriage was a farce! All is over between us. Let no one mention his name to me!"

"Gloria, what are you saying?" demanded Mrs. Bennett, sternly. "Have you no pride?"

"It is true, and you know it! I confessed it to you, and begged you to give me to him in Lillith's stead, before she had ever seen him and had a chance to learn to love him. And he loved me in return. He never said so, but I knew it—I knew it all the time. It is why he left Lillith almost at the altar. He would not wrong her or himself further."

"Mother! you have made a great mistake in not permitting your children to choose for themselves. You have ruined both our lives."

"Gloria!" exclaimed Mrs. Bennett in a shocked voice. "How can you say such things in your sister's hearing? Has she not enough to bear?"

"Whose fault is it that she is called upon to bear this humiliation? Who is to blame that the woman who loves him instead of the one who hates him is not his wife?"

"Child, you do not know what you are talking about. It could not be—that which you asked."

"No, it could not be, because it is your daughter you wished to settle in life. And—well, I doubt if I am your daughter!"

"Gloria!"

"Look at me! Wherein do I resemble either you or Lillith?"

She went nearer to Mrs. Bennett and demanded:

"Who am I? Tell me who I am, if you can, if you will! Not your daughter, evidently; as it is Lillith you have planned to benefit—if indeed this mockery of a marriage is a benefit."

"Gloria, have done!"

"There is some serious reason why you refused to listen to my entreaties. I asked you—I begged of you to change your plans before Lillith ever saw Glen Alden."

"Gloria, you break my heart!" moaned Mrs. Bennett, sinking into a seat and covering her face with her hands.

"No, it is not your heart that is broken, my mother. If indeed you are my mother. There is some mystery about my birth that I never could fathom. I am going back to the East and ferret out what you have seen fit to keep from me.

I have no other ambition now than to learn the secret of my birth. I have loved and lost before, and I have lived it down. I shall master this passion also. I have only one thing to live for now."

"Stop, I command you! Let this subject drop, and never refer to it again." Mrs. Bennett rose to her feet and drew herself up to a dignified attitude. "There is no mystery at all. You are my elder daughter, but there is a very good reason why I should give Lillith in marriage instead of you to Abner Alden's son."

"Whatever the reason, it has ruined my happiness, for the only man I have cared for since you parted me from my youthful lover is now my sister's husband."

"The only regret I have," said Lillith, coldly, "is that I shall find it difficult to look the world in the face."

"Leave it to me," her mother advised. "The world will accept the explanation his father and I will make. And soon your husband shall be restored to you."

"Mother," said Lillith, firmly, "don't humiliate me further by assuming that I desire his return. I shall decline to receive him, or ever to speak to him again."

"And I, as well as Lillith, wish never to hear his name mentioned. More than that I shall find a way to escape all remembrances of him."

With that Gloria made a hasty but dignified retreat. And Lillith soon after quitted the room, leaving her mother alone, worried and baffled. She was greatly distressed and nearly at her wit's end. But without delay she ordered her automobile, and very soon she stood in the presence of the Aldens, father and daughter. She had generaled the affair up to this point, and the denouement was not what she had expected. She was not one to give way at disappointments, or to shed tears. She was the sort that acts.

The moment the old man saw her face he knew that some part of her plans had miscarried; that something about the transaction was not what she had bargained for. And it was easy for him to guess where the trouble lay, though he and Fern, as well as Glen himself, believed it was the position, not the man, she wished to secure for her daughter, and that neither would object to the bridegroom's alleged business trip. What the world might say had not occurred to them, or that it was necessary to appease the public's curiosity.

Mrs. Bennett seated herself in an easy chair and looked at the old man severely. Mr. Alden sent his daughter from the room and faced the situation at once.

"Is it thus you keep your part of the bargain?" she demanded.

"It was not my fault," he stammered. "It was the best I could do. Glen is obstinate, more so than I thought."

"And this is the way my child is treated—held up to public view as a bride deserted by her husband!"

"We can fix it up as far as public opinion is concerned. And your position in society and that of your daughter will be secure."

"I will not accept such a fulfilment of your part of the transaction," she said, angrily. "I demand that you request your son's return. If the marriage is to be merely a farce, let him play his part in it like a man. His conduct is not much different from that of his father at his age, I see."

"Ellen, be just! That was not entirely my fault, either. What use to discuss it? You know well enough how that was."

"The past matters little now. It is a waste of time to discuss it. But you must command your son's return to prevent scandal. If you had told me it was to be all a sham, I should have called the affair off. How dared you work such a scheme on me?"

"I did not believe the boy would keep his word about going away. I felt sure your daughter's influence would be sufficient to keep him by her side."

"My daughter is too proud and too independent to use her influence in a matter of that sort. If his love and respect for her could not keep him, then she did not desire his presence. It is I who care for the looks of things. It was reckless of appearances, too, at Lillith's age. But now, for her sake, the matter must be adjusted in a different manner. He must do his share to keep up appearances."

Mrs. Bennett rose to her feet and leaned toward him, her steady gaze holding his own.

"Do you know why he did this—why he deserted his bride on the very day of their wedding? That is the word—deserted—no matter what his pretext. He has deserted her, and Lillith has renounced him, and forbidden us to mention his name in her presence. I don't know how I shall be able to win her over to my way of thinking, after what has happened, but I simply must. I won't have the scandal that a separation would cause at this time in her life."

"You asked if I knew why he left her on their wedding day; I know of no reason except that the marriage was not of his seeking. We forced it onto him, you and I, to serve our own ends. We must be lenient with him for acting hastily. We both thought your daughter overpersuaded also—that she would welcome his absence until she had grown accustomed to the thought of being married. There was no voluntary love on either side.'

"You are mistaken. Lillith fell in love with your son at their first meeting. But she now declares most emphatically that she hates him for the way he has treated her."

"But what is the reason you hinted at for his desertion of her?"

"Your son was in love with Gloria, and we gave him Lillith instead."

"In love with Gloria!" The old man sat down in a dumfounded manner. "Did you ever hear anything so ridiculous! Ellen, what are we to do? What can we do? Verily, the sins of the parents are visited upon the children!"

He shuddered and covered his face with his hands.

"What can we do about it? Ellen, suggest something!"

"Tell them both the truth."

"Yes, yes; the only way! But the world——"

"Have I not made a mess of it trying to keep the world in ignorance? Is it likely I shall bungle further? Say nothing to any one until I have talked with Gloria."

"And then, Ellen, may I see her?" The voice was almost pleading in its accents.

"When I have told her all I will send her to you," she promised.

A light shone into Abner Alden's eyes that made him look years younger.

There was little more said between them, and soon Mrs. Bennett took her leave. But she found upon her arrival home that Gloria had carried out her threat and left for the East. Had she really hopes of learning something concerning her parentage? Or was it arranged between them that she and Glen should meet?

CHAPTER VI.

"HELEN OF TROY."

As has been stated Helen Bliss, dubbed "Helen of Troy" because of her lack of beauty, though otherwise a good-natured girl, was slightly jealous of the other members of the Bohemian club to which she belonged. Added to this was an overwhelming desire on her part to start something—anything to break the monotony of the regular routine. It was she who had tapped the message on the window-pane of the Alden home.

"Don't meet with the club again until further notice," was the import of this message. And Fern had understood it; but why she was given such notice was what puzzled her. She meant to corner Helen and find out, if she could, why she must refrain from meeting with the club, and for how long. Helen would know if any one, she believed—she was the leading spirit of everything. But she had avoided the subject, even avoided being alone with Fern. Therefore she must insist on an interview. And so one afternoon Helen found Fern in her drawingroom, the question in her eyes. She would have evaded this meeting if she had been forewarned, and Fern had surmised as much. The two lived but a few blocks apart, and she had walked the distance to Helen's home, and told no one of her intended visit. Helen was confused when she appeared before her unannounced.

"Why, Fern Alden!" she cried, "where did you come from? I haven't seen you for ages!"

"Which is your fault entirely, Helen," replied Fern, going directly to the point. "You know I have been seeking an interview ever since I received a certain message. Why was I warned not to meet with the club, Helen? Is there any danger of our ultra-fastidious friends learning the truth?"

"It may be that is the danger that threatens us. For of course you know that in some way or another every member of both clubs received the same warning—if indeed it was meant for a warning. The one I received was written out in shorthand. Here is is: "You see it is the very same, we are to wait until further notice before we meet again."

There was a peculiar smile wreathing her lips, and a roguish twinkle in her bright eyes, which Fern was unable to see.

"The strange part of it is," she continued, "no one knows, or can find out, who sent the messages, or why it is necessary to postpone the meetings. I have interviewed, either personally or by letter, every one of them, and no one will own to knowing a thing about it. Do you suppose an outsider has cognition of our society?"

"An outsider would scarcely know every member of both clubs. And who would go to such lengths? But if it is a practical joke who warned us, I suppose it was done for some good reason, and we would better heed the warning. We all have relations who would be horrified to learn of our society. It were better to break up the membership before it comes to light that such clubs exist. The very names they bear would cause comment."

"It is for that very reason, no doubt, that some one has taken the liberty to disorganize the clubs surreptitiously. Everything would come to light eventually, so let us be thankful to whosoever it may be."

"For my part I shall not care. I would have been better off if I had stayed in the beaten track. But I was anxious to know more about it—what the reason is, and so forth. What if it should become known—that marriage? Oh, Helen! I am afraid!"

"Let us seek the advice of the gypsy fortune-teller," said Helen, "and become enlightened on the subject. It is said that she can tell you anything."

Fern laughed.

"No doubt of it. But is there any truth in what she tells you? You went once, didn't you, the night of our ball? Did she mention the subject then?"

"No, but she told me something of importance, she told me whom I am destined to marry."

"Yes, I remember. The beautiful Helen of Troy' is to wed the handsomest man in her set. But only time can prove her words true or false."

There was a peculiar smile wreathing the lips of Fern Alden, a smile Helen could not interpret; but it left her feeling as if she had come out second best, and gave her the impression that Fern was not greatly worried over the matter. She hastened to persuade her friend to go with her to consult the old gypsy, who could tell them all about everything they wanted to know.

"I will meet you there at nine o'clock, Thursday night," she said. "Will you come—just to see what she will tell us?"

Fern hesitated. But why not? It would be somewhat in the nature of a lark, and she was rather in need of a change. Her adventurous spirit asserted itself.

"Yes, I will go," she said, "but I don't have much faith that she can tell either the past or the future truthfully. I don't believe in fortune-tellers."

"Which is the same as saying you don't believe she told my fortune truthfully," said Helen, teasingly.

Again the peculiar smile and look of understanding on her companion's face caused Helen a pang of chagrin. It made her feel uncomfortable. Fern either had reason to be sure of Max Folsom's affections, or she believed her own far-fetched claims to him prompted by malice.

After settling more fully the details of their intended visit to the gypsy's abode, the two girls parted in the hall. Fern was as ignorant as ever concerning the matter that had prompted her visit to Helen's home, which was very near, now she came to think of it, to the domicile of the gypsy fortune-teller. However, she went home determined to heed the warning given in such a peculiar manner, especially as the entire membership had received a like notice. If they all obeyed, it meant the dissolution of both clubs, the best thing for them all, she had reason to believe. Her experience had sobered her very materially. It had spoiled her future. She should never care to meet with the old crowd again, nor share in the fun and frolic usually inspired by the unmanageable, incorrigible "Helen of Troy."

Fern had only one ambition now, and that was to find the man she had married for fun that eventful night, and learn if possible whether he was or not that the pseudo-minister chosen to perform the mock ceremony was in reality a justice of the peace. If he was not aware of the fact, perhaps it did not matter, as he was not likely to meet with the club again, and she knew such a marriage was not binding. And if he did know the truth, it was probable they could fix it up without publicity.

But how to find out in what light the man in the case regarded that night's escapade without betraying the fact that it was she who took part in it—something he might possibly be ignorant of—and that she now looked upon the matter in a serious light, was the problem. Her make-up that night was something of a disguise; and it might be, in fact it was highly probable, that the incident had entirely slipped from his mind by this time. It was in a different sort of gathering she had met him next, and of course she would never have known that he was there had not Helen Bliss, the moving spirit in everything, good, bad, and indifferent, enlightened her under the pledge of secrecy. While turning these things over in her mind, she thought of the fortune-teller whom she had agreed to visit. There were things she wanted to know that Helen must not hear.

"I will go a little early," she decided, "and get it over before Helen arrives, and I can put her off if she quizzes me. She expects to hear my fortune read from my palm. She wouldn't care at all if I stood by and heard everything that was told her. If she doesn't have the old gypsy bribed to tell her in my presence that she is to wed my fiance I will be surprised. I would willingly exchange places with her as far as looks are concerned, to have her nonchalant, don't-care nature. Apparently she doesn't mind being plain-featured, though she refers to it so often. None of us would notice her lack of beauty if she herself would let us forget it."

This visit of Fern's to the home of Helen Bliss took place three weeks after Glen's marriage to Lillith Bennett. So much had happened to her since she had received the message tapped on the window-pane that she had been obliged to wait for its solution. And the mystery of it was still pending.

Her father's health had improved noticeably; or it may be that excitement acting as a stimulus kept him on his feet. He rode often to the home of Mrs. Bennett, and the two held consultations together; but so far they had been unable to conciliate Lillith, who forbade them to solicit Glen's return. As yet she had taken no steps toward having the farce, as she termed the marriage, set aside. But she persisted in going out to theaters and balls without her mother, and rumor said she was receiving the attentions of another man.

"It is because she feels the humiliation of her position that she flirts, if indeed it is true that she accepts the attention of another," explained Mrs. Bennett, in extenuation of her daughter's conduct, though Mr. Alden had not opened his lips to chide. How could he censure the young bride for the course she had taken when he found it difficult to condone the behavior of his son? For, strange to say, he had received no word from Glen since his departure three weeks before.

These two, sweethearts once, away back in the past, were each other's only comfort now, even though their time together was spent in trying to exonerate the conduct of their children. Their greatest disappointment was that Gloria had disappeared, leaving not even a note behind her—only that threat made to her mother to go back to the East whence she came. And it was in that direction Glen had gone, unless he had changed his mind. They might meet, and then—what then? A thought struck Mrs. Bennett that made her shiver.

Why had both of them gone away directly after the wedding? Was it planned between them beforehand? Was it an elopement? Her heart constricted at the horrible thought. Such things had happened before. But to Gloria! No, no! It could not be! Gloria was different—she was pure, proud and spirited. She her mother, could not, would not harbor the thought. And she did not even whisper it to the perturbed man before her. They had had troubles of their own in their youth; now their troubles were of their own making.

"If only I had been given a chance to tell her all!" moaned the woman. "She went believing I favored Lillith because I was not her own mother. It was only to you I declared she was a stepdaughter. She could have known nothing of that. How could she have got the notion into her head?"

"It was because she knew there was some mystery about her birth kept from her. I wish you had t ld us both the truth in the beginning," said Mr. Alden, trying to keep his tone free from censure. "But when you hear from her, as you surely will before very long, tell her all and ask her to return.

"If you and Lillith would only come home with me," he added; "it is her home by right, and it is your place to be by your daughter's side."

"It cannot be—not with your son gone from his proper place. No, not even if Lillith was willing."

"I will find him if it is possible!" cried he. "Glen shall return to his obligations. It is not likely he will refuse when he knows all. He believed your daughter married him for worldly considerations; that is why he felt himself de trop. He felt certain she would be glad to dispense with his presence."

"I will tell that to Lillith," cried the mother; "it may influence her."

"And then there is Gloria," he said; "I shall never rest until she is found."

And so it went on from day to day. Either the Bennett automobile stood at the Alden door, or Mr. Alden drove to the Bennet home. Lillith always greeted the old man pleasantly. The sweetness of her disposition prevented any coldness on her part toward the father of the man who had wronged her; but she avoided the subject nearest his heart. And she invariably ordered the motor car and rode out soon after his coming.

It is not to be supposed that either Mrs. Bennett or her daughter renounced all social pleasures or neglected social duties. The elder woman, especially, mingled with the people she had met during her short career in the social world, and casually explained to those curious about the absence of the bridegroom that important business matters called him abroad.

Of course there was gossip. No one had ever known Mr. Alden to have business of any sort on his hands before. Since his graduation from college he had been just a gentleman of leisure to all appearances. But now, of course, owing to his father's ill health, it was quite different, necessarily. Yet it certainly was most urgent business that would call a man away on his wedding day. It was also strange that Gloria Bennett should choose this time to visit the East from which she so recently moved. Glen was quite enamored of the sister, too, wasn't he?

Mrs. Bennett, old in the ways of the world and the nature of its people, knew all that was said as well as if her associates had not shrugged their shoulders and politely ignored the subject in her presence. But she felt she must face it out and live down the near-disgrace. After a while things would adjust themselves, and her affairs would cease to be a matter of interest to others. There was nothing else to do but to keep up the farce as long as might be necessary, and hope and pray that neither of her daughters would disgrace her greatly.

The continuation of this interesting story will be found in the Ledger issue of next week. If you are not a regular subscriber to the Ledger we would like to have your name on our list. The Ledger is only $1.00 per year and we have stories awaiting publication that you cannot afford to miss.

* * *

To reduce flesh try living on a diet of love.

THE THIRD-FLAT GHOST

By George Weymouth

He held up both pistols.

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CHAPTER VII.

THE CASE GROWS DARKER.

PROFESSOR T. BURLINGHAM QUINCY was at the apartment building in Queechy court before eight o'clock the next morning.

"I have been waiting till you came before I looked for the key in the closet," said Captain Butler, who met the Professor at the door.

"Never mind the key, captain. If it's there it will stay there till we get ready to look for it."

"I've been thinking maybe we'd get another letter this morning."

"You'll get no more letters. There were only three of them. Take me to the room."

"To Juan's room?"

"Of course. You know I have never seen it."

"Well, there's nothing there to see. The body has been removed and the place cleaned out."

"You haven't taken away the bed?"

"No; but come on and see the room, since you think it is important."

"I certainly do think it is important. I know what happened, but that is not sufficient. I must be able to demonstrate it."

"You needn't be so blamed mysterious about it," the captain grumbled, as he led the way upstairs. "If you know what happened, why don't you tell a fellow? Was there anything in that writing of that ghostly negro's?"

Professor Quincy did not reply.

"Did you make the translation?" asked the captain.

"Oh, yes."

"May I see it?"

"Certainly," smiled the Professor.

They had reached the top floor, now, and a moment later they were standing in the room which had formerly been occupied by Juan Duprez.

It was a large bedchamber, and nearly square. The door from the hall opened in the northwest corner. The bed itself was ranged along the west wall, south of the door, and against the hall partition. The head of the bed lay to the south.

Directly across the room the only window opened to the east. It was a large window, and was two short paces—say a matter of five feet—from the edge of the bed. There was a bureau north of the window along the east wall. A rocking chair stood in front of the bureau. A small straight-backed chair stood near the center of the room, between the bed and the window.

"Is this the way the furniture was standing?" asked Professor Quincy, after he had made a hasty examination of the room.

"Yes, sir; exactly."

"No, you are mistaken!"

"What in thunder do you know about it?" cried the captain. "You never saw the room before, while I took a careful note of everything before even the body was touched."

Professor Quincy smiled tolerantly.

"Now think a minute, captain. This straight-backed chair has been removed. Was it here—" he picked the chair up and set it down by the foot of the bed—"or was it here?" He set it over against the south wall by the head of the bed.

A red flush crept over the captain's cheek.

"You are right, and I was wrong," he said. "I'll hand it to you, Professor. I don't know how you guessed it. But that chair stood where it stands now, by the head of the bed. I remember it because Juan's trousers were folded up neatly and laid across the back of it."

"That's better. That's where it ought to stand."

"But how in the deuce do you know?"

"Because it would have spoiled the plot to have the chair stand in the center of the room. I'll explain that later. The window was open, I believe you said?"

"Yes. The lower sash was thrown up to its full height."

Professor Quincy walked to the window and looked out. The adjoining lot was vacant. At some time the earth had been dug out of the central portion of it, perhaps in excavating for the basement of a building which had never been put up, and there was a pool of water there.

"Is there always water in that duck pond?" asked the Professor.

"I don't know; why?" The policeman looked at the spot indifferently.

"I was just wondering," said the Professor, softly.

"If I remember rightly it goes dry in the summer. You know we have had a good deal of rain recently."

"The water must be two or three feet deep?"

"It looks like it; but it isn't deep enough to drown a man, Professor. I'm sorry not to be able to furnish you with a tragedy in connection with our little lake."

"Oh, you never know where there's a tragedy. But I was just wondering why the water stood there. It's so sandy here near the lake that it looks as if the place would drain off."

He turned his attention to a big oak tree which stood by the window, the top branches of which were within reach of his hand when he leaned out.

"A man could almost climb up this tree and get in the window," he observed.

"I thought of that, myself," said the captain. "But you will notice how slender the branches are. It would take a monkey, or an acrobat, to climb the tree in the first place, and then when he got to the little limbs they would bend beneath his weight. He never could reach this window."

"I believe you are right about that," agreed the Professor.

Yet he stood, peering into the branches of the tree thoughtfully for a long time.

"Well, it's so simple that I wonder we didn't think of it in the first place," he remarked, at last, as he turned away from the window and walked back to the bed.

The covering had been removed, and only the bare mattress lay on the springs. There was a little dark stain near the center of the mattress, and the bullet hole was plainly visible.

"What is it you find so simple?" asked the captain.

But Professor Quincy asked a question instead of answering one.

"Where is the weapon?"

"I have it in my pocket," said the captain, and he immediately produced it. "It's a nice gun, I wouldn't mind having one like it."

"You have found out where it was purchased, of course?"

"No, there's a mystery about that, too. It's a brand new gun, I am sure, and there are only a few places in town where they are sold. And while the ordinance against selling weapons is not always obeyed to the letter, the dealers usually keep a record of the sale. I sent a man all around yesterday, with a photograph of Kirkland Bliss, and it seems he did not buy the gun in Chicago."

Professor Quincy smiled almost pityingly.

"Did it never occur to you that Juan Duprez might have bought the gun?"

"No, it didn't."

"Well, have you got a recent photograph of Juan?"

"I have." The captain dug once more into his capacious pockets and brought out the photograph.

Quincy looked at it searchingly.

"Quite mad," he said at last. "And as clever as Michaevelli. Here, captain, have you got a good detective within easy call?"

"Have I? You watch me!"

He went to the window and leaned out, uttering a low whistle. An officer in plain clothes, who had been sauntering idly along the sidewalk, looked up instantly, and the captain beckoned.

In another minute heavy feet could be heard ascending the stairs and the panting detective entered the room.

Professor Quincy looked at the officer kindly.

"Here," he said, handing over the photograph of the dead man; "take that picture to Eisenberg's pawn shop on Halsted street, and find out just when it was that Juan Duprez—he probably didn't use his own name, but Eisenberg will identify him by the photograph—find out when it was he bought two pistols like this. And get back here as quick as you can."

Captain Butler did not bat an eyelash, though he must have been more surprised than even the detective himself at this unexpected order.

"You can make it in half an hour, Mike, if you hurry," said the captain, by way of placing his O. K. on the order. "Take the first machine you can find."

"All right, captain."

When the man had departed, Captain Butler turned pathetic eyes toward the ghost hunter.

"Why two?" he asked.

Quincy laughed outright.

"I'm not trying to mystify you, my captain. But if my theory of the case is right, there were two of the pistols, the one with which the actual shooting was done, and this one, which had previously been planted in Kirkland's room."

"In order to convict him of murder?"

"No, it was meant that Miss Dudley, in response to the letters, should remove all these damning clews."

"Well, you may have the grasp of this mystery but it gets darker and darker to me," confessed the captain.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE TWO PISTOLS.

There was a knock at the door of the bedroom, and Elizabeth Dudley and Kirkland Bliss came in.

"We just couldn't stand it any longer," the girl smiled. "It seemed that you were going to stay in this room all the morning, and our curiosity became unbearable. I hope you are not going to send us away."

"No, you may remain," said Professor Quincy. "In fact, before I reconstruct the drama of Juan's death before your eyes, I want to ask Kirkland a question. There is one link in the chain of circumstances that needs to be supplied.

"I am ready to answer any question."

"Then where did you go, night before last, between nine and ten o'clock?"

Captain Butler stiffened up eagerly at this unexpected question, like a dog that scents game.

"I didn't go anywhere that I remember," said Kirkland.

"Please reflect. It was just a little while after your quarrel with Juan, about which I mean to ask you in a moment. Where was your mother, and what was she doing?"

"Oh, I remember, now. Mother had one of her sick headaches. I can tell you just what happened. I went in the dining-room and she was not there. I found her lying down in her bedroom, with the gas turned low. I brought her a drink of water, and then went back in the dining-room and looked on the mantel for a headache powder. The doctor thinks she shouldn't take them, but nothing else seems to relieve her on such occasions."

"And you didn't find the headache powder?" asked the Professor quickly.

"No, there was not one left."

"So you got your hat and went out to the drug store?"

"Indeed I did, though I can't see how you could have known it? I went over to Evanston avenue. There were a number of people in the store at the time. I think I can recall some of their names if it is an important point."

"It is important. You left your door unlocked?"

"Yes, mother was in the flat. I didn't think of locking the door."

"But from her position in her own room she could not see into your bedroom?"

"No, certainly not. That flat is arranged like this. My room opens off the hall."

"You did not wear your overcoat?"

"No."

"You left it lying across the bed, or was it hanging in the closet?"

"It was in the closet."

"And your gloves were in the overcoat?"

"Yes, sir."

"Precisely as I thought. Now, in reference to the quarrel? How did it begin?"

"Why, it was rather peculiar, from the fact that Juan began it. He usually slunk out of the way to avoid meeting with me. If he saw me in the hall he would wait until I left before he came in, or went out, as the case might be. If we both got off the same elevated train he would hurry up to get ahead of me, or else lag back, so he would not have to speak to me."

"He was afraid of you, perhaps?"

"Well, I wouldn't say that. We were not overfond of each other, but we never had quarreled openly. That night, however, he came and knocked at my door, which struck me as being strange. When I saw who it was I asked him, rather coldly I expect, what it was he wanted.

"'I just wanted to tell you that I have written a letter to Bess, asking her to go to the theater with me,' he said, grinning in a way that I found peculiarly aggravating.

"I may explain that he had made a nuisance of himself by writing letters to Miss Dudley. She didn't like to get them, and he knew it."

"I suppose I must have received a hundred letters from him, altogether," interposed the girl. "Most of these I destroyed, but some of them I have yet, if you care to see them."

"Never mind," said Quincy.

"Well," continued Bliss, "it made me hot when he boldly announced that he had written her another letter, asking to take her to the theater, and—"

"You see," broke in the girl, "in all his letters he would write as if we were acknowledged lovers, as he did in these letters we have been receiving since his death. That was what vexed me so. He knew I detested and feared him, and that Kirkland and I were engaged, and yet he pretended that I was devoted to him, and that Kirkland was jealous."

"I understand," said Quincy, softly. "But please let Mr. Bliss finish."

"Well, there wasn't much to it. As I say, his remark made me hot. I told him to cut it out—I don't remember just what he said, but I know it made me still madder. It was his way, rather than his words.

"I guess I told him that I would wring his neck. When he grinned at me in that superior, tantalizing way of his I went for him. If I had got my hands on him I would have hurt him, I think.

"He ran up the stairs, however, and I saw that Mrs. Gardener had come out of her apartment and was looking at us in a scared way, so I did not follow him.

"'What's the use in bothering about that crazy loon?' I thought, and I went on into my flat. I wish now I had had it out with him right there. He said something about getting even with me as he dodged upstairs, and I guess he is making good his threat," concluded Kirkland, disconsolately.

"All this happened just as I thought it did," said Quincy, smiling at Captain Butler. "And now, if you all will be patient with me until Mike comes back from the pawnshop—" he looked at his watch—"you will know the whole secret, except one rather unimportant fact, in a few minutes."

"In the meantime, won't you tell us about the spirit message you received through that negro last night?" coaxed Bess Dudley. "I am just dying to read it."

"I wouldn't be so bold as to call it a spirit message," objected the Professor.

"Well, it was a message, anyway, wasn't it? It meant something, and had something to do with this case?"

"Well, it was rather startling," admitted the Professor, slowly. "But I have never quite made up my mind whether this form of automatic writing is a sort of telepathy, just plain suggestion—whatever that is—or whether it is indeed a communication from some unseen and unseeable intelligence. And not being sure of the source or the authenticity of the messages, I am a little cautious about placing too much importance in them."

"I think you are real mean not to tell us," the girl pouted.

"I hope you will pardon me," said the Professor, "if I let the matter pass at present. Sometime, when occasion serves better and we have no tragic mysteries on our hands, I may find it convenient to give you a glimpse into the occult world as far as we know it. Just now," he threw back his head and listened, "I hear the footsteps of Mike, and we are all of us anxious to get his report."

As he ceased, the heavy feet of the detective could indeed be heard on the stairway, and a moment later the man entered the room.

"You are right," he panted, turning instinctively toward the Professor rather than to his own chief. "You were right. It was Juan that bought the pistols. He got them at Eisenberg's last Saturday. He gave his name as John Depew, but the clerk identified his picture positively. He said he was going on a ranch out in Montana, so they winked at the law and let him have them, along with a box of cartridges. He seemed pretty green about the weapons, and they had to explain to him how the mechanism worked."

"And what does it mean?" asked Kirkland Bliss.

"And how did you guess it?" asked Captain Butler.

"Is the suspicion lifted from Kirkland now?" cried Bess.

"I am going to answer all your questions at once, by a very simple demonstration," said Professor Quincy. "But first let me tell you what our friend Juan did."

With tense faces, scarcely daring to breathe, the four gathered close about the Professor, so as not to miss a word of his explanation.

CHAPTER IX.

RECONSTRUCTING A TRAGEDY.

"I have said before that Juan Duprez was mad," began Professor Quincy, "and there is never any way of following out the peculiar mental process of a madman, especially when he is more than half a genius, as our Juan certainly was.

"It is probable, however, that he planned this tragedy for months. He was tired of living, but he wasn't satisfied to depart from this life in a commonplace way and leave the world to go on contentedly without him.

"Unable to make any impression on Miss Dudley in the capacity of a lover, he determined to take a peculiar revenge upon her. Also, he wanted to bind her to himself with a bond that she might not break, however much she detested it.

"He was actuated as much by love as by hate, perhaps. Motives are always so mixed in the sanest of us, that we hardly know why we do a thing. His spite against Kirkland was only incidental. He did not really mean to make Kirkland out a murderer, at least not to the extent of having him punished.

"He was satisfied to have suspicion rest upon the man who had become his victor in the game of love—for however much he may have pretended in his letters that Miss Dudley cared for him, in his heart he knew better, and he was only playing a game of pretense, as a child might do.

"Juan was a master of cunning, and the plan he made deserves our admiration for its cleverness. He was too clever, of course, as plotters usually are, and the fact that he overdid it is what caused his schemes to fail.

"Having decided to kill himself, he bought the two pistols last Saturday. On Sunday, you probably will find by investigation that he took a trip into the country, where he fired a single shot from one of the weapons, leaving the other fully loaded.

"He came back to his room and wrote the three letters which Miss Dudley received yesterday. His fiendish object was to burden her soul with a guilty secret that would have poisoned all her life. In spite of her loyalty, if she had destroyed these letters and removed the clews he refers to, there would have gradually grown up in her heart a suspicion that Kirkland might be guilty; even though no public charge of the crime might have been made against him."

"The villain!" exclaimed Kirkland Bliss, unable to keep silent.

"We will be more charitable, and say the madman," said the Professor, gently. "But let me continue. At any rate we may be sure that if things had gone the way he had planned, you two never could have married, or in case you did marry, you never could have lived happily together. That dark secret would have stalked between you, growing ever more dark and deadly, and would have driven Miss Dudley either to madness or to death. No man ever devised a more refined and dreadful torture.

"How he managed about mailing the letters, we do not know, and it is not of the first importance, though we might make a very good guess. If you will look at the envelope you will see, what you perhaps overlooked at first, that they were all marked faintly and distinctly in lead pencil on the back, thus:"

He spread out the envelopes and pointed out the characters with his lead pencil.

"No 1, you will see is marked '6,' No. 2 is marked '10,' and No. 3, '5,' thus showing the order in which they were to be mailed, and the hours. He might have hired somebody to do this for him, or he might have obtained a pledge from some friend to do it. The mailer, of course, did not know of the death, as you managed to keep it away from the newspapers until the late editions last night. You may be able to discover who posted the letters, if you care to follow it up, but I don't think it worth while, as the chances are he is a perfectly innocent person who may not know even yet that he was unconsciously connected with a tragedy.

"Having made his plans like this, it was only necessary for him to carry them out. He voluntarily sought occasion to quarrel with Kirkland at nine o'clock in the evening. Then he watched his chance to enter the room while you, Bliss, were away for the headache powder. If you had not gone out he probably would have broken in with a skeleton key later the evening after you were asleep.

"He took your glove, from your overcoat pocket, hid the gun in your chiffonier, the key in your closet—we haven't looked yet, but we are sure to find it there.

"Then he complained to the landlady about the lost key and pretended to be afraid of assassination. You see he was building up circumstances which Bess was sure to hear about, to confirm and corroborate the direct charges made in his letters. He wanted to make sure, whether the police believed Kirkland guilty, or not, that Bess should have no room for doubt in her own mind.

"Thus, having made all his plans patiently, and as he believed perfectly, it only remained for him to come back to his room and wait for the hour named in his letter to ring down the curtain on the last act in his tragedy. We may imagine that those were long hours for him, between ten o'clock and three, when he was alone with his own soul. But it is a tribute to his stanchness and courage that he was able to adhere strictly to his plan without weakening at the enforced delay. No suicide ever could have been more cold-blooded."

"But you haven't got to the meat of the matter," declared Captain Butler. "It is a beautiful theory, and the fact that he bought the two pistols himself does much to sustain it, but what did he do with the other pistol? How did he get rid of it? That is the very heart of the whole mystery. You tell me that, and I'll take off my hat to you."

"I'm coming to that, now. Let he take the pistol, the one you found in Kirkland's room."

"I wish you would unload the thing. I'm afraid of it, and I don't know how it works."

Captain Butler "broke it," and removed the cartridges from the magazine.

"I suppose," the Professor looked at the men and smiled, "that when you were boys and lost a marble or an arrow you have tried finding it by shooting another in the same direction?"

They nodded.

"Well, I am going to try finding the pistol with which Juan really killed himself by reproducing his last act. You are sure you have removed every load from this thing?"

"Sure said the captain.

"You see we don't want to have an accidental tragedy to wind up with, and as I say, I am afraid of firearms. Now watch me."

He walked to the window and reached out, seizing a slender, swinging branch of the oak tree which grew close to the house.

He drew this branch through the window and walked back to the bed, still holding the elastic oak twig in his hand.

"Do you see where this turned-back

The oak limb springing out of the window carried the pistol.

limb has been cut off, making a sort of hook?" he asked. "Juan did that. You see Nature planted the accessories to his mystery right to his hand, and he was quick to take advantage of her help.

"The poor fellow lay down on the bed as I do——"

Professor Quincy here laid his slender body on the bed, in about the position Juan must have occupied.

"Having tucked the covers up under his chin, our suicidal friend hooked this branch in the trigger guard of the pistol, like this, let us say, and then, holding the weapon firmly in place with his right hand, he fired the bullet through his heart.

"He died instantly, as Captain Butler has proved. Then his hand relaxed, and the branch sprang back and carried the weapon out of the window, probably flinging it into that pool of water. Now, watch where this weapon goes!"

He released his grasp, the oak limb swung out of the window, carrying the pistol with it. All of the excited listeners crowded about the window to see where the weapon fell. It sailed gracefully through the air and splashed almost in the center of the pool of water in the adjoining vacant lot.

"There," said Professor Quincy, coolly. "You will find the other pistol a few inches on this side of the one we have just seen fall. You see that one was loaded, and this was empty. The weight of the cartridges will make a little difference in the distance."

"Go, Mike!" commanded Captain Butler.

And while the faithful Mike made his way hurriedly to the little pond the others waited by the window, too breathlessly intent upon his search to speak a word. Mike waded into the pond, regardless of his shoes and trousers.

"A little to the left," cried the captain.

"And about two feet farther on," said Quincy. "There, now look."

Mike began to fish around in the water with his hand—it was so deep that his sleeve was wet to the shoulder, and within a minute he had found what he sought. He held up both pistols triumphantly.

Butler turned to the scientist with pitiful eagerness.

"Won't you tell me—please tell me—how you figured it out?"

"I am sorry to disappoint you, my friend," said the Professor, gently. "But I have an important engagement. I must bid you good-by."

He shook hands with them all, and then started hurriedly to the door.

"Wait a minute!" cried Bess, and the Professor paused as she came toward him with outstretched hands.

"I am going to kiss your, sir!"

And although the poor Professor's face grew as red as a baby's, and there was the terrified look of a hunted animal in his eyes, he stood his ground bravely till she did it.

Then he ran.

The End.

Judge Gave Aid.

Judge George W. Stubbs was fond of telling a story about himself which illustrated, he said, that sometimes we hold out the helping hand to a less fortunate brother in the hope of benefiting ourselves.

"Shortly after I was married," he said, "I settled in Cincinnati and began the practice of law there. I had just established a comfortable, cozy home when I found we had a very annoying neighbor. On Sunday afternoons, when I expected to rest, this neighbor would, with his friends, become extremely boisterous. I decided that the man had neglected his education along certain lines. I also found, on investigation, that the troublesome neighbor was not employed, but was living on a few hundred dollars his wife had inherited.

"The neighbor who had aroused me to action was invited, with his wife, to spend a Sunday with us. At the dinner table the neighbor and his wife appeared uneasy. After dinner he and I talked things over and finally the neighbor showed signs of awakening, and I suggested that he go to work. I obtained employment for him in a factory, but he soon gave up the factory job. Then I helped him to get several other positions, but he did not want to 'stick.' Then as a last resort I got him a place as a brakeman on the railroad. The man had found his calling in that work. He has 'stayed with it' ever since, and is now general superintendent of a railroad system on the Pacific Coast.

"He has visited me a number of times," said Judge Stubbs shortly before his death, "and each time he has thanked me for what I did for him. He always said that I was responsible for his success in life. But you see I tried to help him in the hope that I might have a quiet Sunday afternoon."

Delicious Cherries.

Miss Armor was noted among her fellow-boarders for her reluctance in sharing any delicacy she happened to have. She once had sent from her home a jar of rich, old-fashioned cherry preserves, which she displayed with pride, but never saw fit to open for eating until one evening when she knew that her five companions were dining out. Then, with secret rejoicing, Miss Armor carried her confection to the empty table. To her chagrin, the waitress soon put a transient man beside her, and the stranger, spying the cherries, took a very plentiful helping on his plate. The maid was in high glee, having herself felt the pinch of Miss Armor's stinginess, but she dutifully interposed.

"Excuse me, sir," she said, "but that's a private dish."

The man looked blankly at the waitress and put a hand behind his ear with the gesture of the very deaf.

"That's all right," he answered pleasantly. "You may bring me everything you have."

The girl went away, giggling, and spread the news in the kitchen region that retribution had overtaken Miss Armor, while the people at the neighboring tables looked and listened with all their might. Despite his deafness, the newcomer was inclined to be sociable.

"These are the best cherries I've tasted for years," he told the cherries' owner. "I beg your pardon. Let me help you to them."

He immediately did so, ladling out a modest portion for her to sample, and replenishing his own plate. Miss Armor glared at him and said icily:

"You need not trouble yourself. They are all mine."

The stranger acknowledged this remark with a courteous smile and bow. "My misfortune prevents my following what you say," he regretted; "but I knew you'd like the cherries."

The jar was a good-sized one, but by the time the man had reached his dessert course the bottom layer of fruit was uncovered. Twice Miss Armor tried to get her property into her own keeping, but both times the agreeable stranger helped her to a small taste and kept the jar out of the clutch of her anxious hands. Finally she settled back in her chair to wait until he was gone, when she meant to tell that snickering waitress what she thought of her, and to carry off at least the remnants of her precious preserves; but only the former satisfaction was permitted her. When the transient man got his pudding he scraped the bottom layer of cherries out on top of it, and said with a sigh of anticipation:

"I never tried this boarding house before, but I'm coming often now. I never saw such cherries since I was a boy. How can she afford to give them for the price she asks for table board?"

Too Little Regret.

"Wanting the spirit, the letter is dull indeed," remarks an officer in Uncle Sam's army, who is a bit of a philosopher as well.

"An English drill sergeant whose severity had made him unpopular with his company was putting a squad of recruits through the funeral exercise. Opening the ranks so as to admit the passage of a cortege between them, the instructor, by way of practical explanation, walked slowly down the lane formed by the two ranks, saying as he did so:

"'Now I am a corpse. Pay attention!'

"Having reached the end of the lane he turned round, regarded the recruits with a scrutinizing eye, and then remarked:

"'Your 'ands is right, and your 'eads is right, but you 'aven't got that look of regret you ought to 'ave!'"

A Resourceful Agent.

It was a small town in central Indiana. The village storekeeper was ticket agent, baggage master, and telegrapher of the little flag station, past which two fast mails thundered each day. At last, growing tired of the monotony of life, he went out and pulled up the flag. The train slid in and came to a stop in front of the tiny station.

"Where's your passenger?" demanded the bustling conductor.

"Waal," drawled the agent, "I dunno as there is any one wantin' to git on, but I kinder thought mebbe some one might want to git off."

Rather Small.

Adoniram Judson, a well-known Plymouth County farmer, conducted a famous farm at Pembroke some fifty years ago. It was in the days when grog was served out to the men on farms at stated hours just as it was to sailors at sea.

One day Judson appeared at the door of the farmhouse at the regular hour and blew the horn that summoned the men for their grog.

"There, Peleg," he told an ancient farmhand, as he poured out his portion, "that rum is twenty five years old."

"Well," Peleg replied, holding up his glass, "it's durned small for its age."

Slain Through Fear

By JAMES C. THRELFALL

"I WILL ask you gentlemen to be seated here, please."

It was Todd, the owner of the D Bar D stock-ranch who spoke, and the tone of his voice and the method he used in punctuating his sentence belied the politeness of the words used in the invitation, for, at the words "gentlemen" and "please" he took occasion to give each of the two "gentlemen" in question a sharp playful thrust in the small-ribs with the gun he carried in the hand nearest to that party.

The two men were Pancho the Mexican and Jose the Indian. Their hands were bound behind their backs with bits of rawhide thong, and they sat down awkwardly on the edges of the chairs indicated by Todd in the livingroom of the D Bar D ranch-house.

Until that morning the two men had constituted the trusted staff of the D Bar D outfit, and when Todd had started out before daylight that same morning for the nearest whistling-post to catch the morning train for Phoenix, he left them jointly in charge of his ranch.

His memory had played him false regarding some papers vital to the business of the trip, and he had returned for the papers some four hours after he had departed, and had found his deputies busily engaged in herding his entire outfit of a hundred cattle toward the Mexican border, which was but a few miles away.

Todd had been able to steal a drop on the two men, and after getting their guns away from them, had compelled them to assist him in getting the herd back to their proper quarters, and had forthwith marched them into the ranch-house for judgment.

Stealing cattle in Arizona is no laughing matter. The two men were of a swarthiness that bordered on pure brown, but as they sat constrainedly waiting for developments, they were almost white from fright.

"Think Madero needed my beef, eh?" Todd spoke to the Greaser.

"He said do it," the Mexican pointed toward the Indian.

"Greaser said do it," the Indian denied with an oath.

"Well," Todd said, slowly, "I don't see what it matters which said do it; the fact remains that you were both doing it when I caught you."

"What do you think ought to be done to him?" he asked the Greaser, pointing toward the half-breed.

"Send him to pentenchry; he's bad Indian."

"What do you think ought to be done to your partner," Todd asked the Indian, in turn.

"Send him to the pentenchry; him bad Greaser."

Todd laughed. He walked over and examined the thongs with which the men were secured. They were good reliable bonds all right. Nothing flimsy about them.

The breeze filtered pleasantly in through the open window, for it was still springtime. Springtime in Arizona is a pleasant season. A little later along in the year, the days and the greater part of the night would turn hot and stifling, and the prairie flowers, which right now scented the breeze with their elusive fragrance, would wither away and die, and the prairie grass, which right now added a pleasant greenness to mesa and valley, would turn brown and lifeless, and what fitful gust of wind there was would be laden with dust and sand.

For the present, life was certainly worth living. Todd threw back his head and filled his lungs with the fresh air. Then his thoughts returned to his unwilling guests.

"Maybe you fellows are right; or rather, since you can't both be right, I should say maybe one of you is right, and the principal degree of guilt should rest on the other. If I had any way of knowing which one was the more to blame."

"Him say me do it, or he blow my brains out," the Indian grunted.

"Liar!" said the Mexican. "You were the one that started it."

"Well, I think I have got a way of finding out and punishing the guilty one."

Todd's eyes turned toward the corner of the livingroom, where a home-made bookcase held a small but well-selected collection of books. Todd was a college-bred man, and one of the hobbies of his younger days had been the forming of a collection of books of magic, white, black, and otherwise.

The book which he now took from the case was a calf-bound volume, yellow with age. It was stamped on the back with some cabalistic design. It was a volume which he had picked up at a bargain from a stand in Kansas City, and it purported to be a translation from a long-forgotten French edition of the works of Cagliostro.

After a brief turning of the pages Todd found what he wanted. He walked back to the end of the room where his ex-attaches sat sullenly glowering at each other.

"Let me have your undivided attention for a moment, gentlemen," he said. "Cagliostro was a very wise man of his day—what your tribe," he nodded toward the Indian, "would call a medicine-man. He wrote the book that I hold here. In it he tells us how we may govern our lives according to the changes of the moon, and direct them according to the influence of the stars in their several courses. He tells us many other things, and here we have something along our line, a way of determining the guilt or innocence of a man accused of crime.

"Now, I don't see that there is any necessity of both you fellows being punished," he proceeded, "for this little cattle-thieving episode. Since you have each insisted on being innocent of any wrong-doing in this matter, except from compulsion on the part of the other, I have come to feel that one of you might, perhaps, be the victim of the other. I am going to give the innocent one a chance to establish his innocence in the way laid down here.

"If I should call the sheriff, he, or one of his deputies would have to ride away up here, and take the two of you to jail, as a result of which arrest and trial later, you would no doubt spend twenty years apiece behind the bars at Phoenix.

"If as a second solution of the problem, I should call up my neighbors on the telephone, the two of you would doubtless find yourselves, within a couple of hours, swinging unpleasantly from the broad limb of the cottonwood down below the watering-place.

"Now old Cagliostro tells us here of a preparation that it just happens I have a flask of in my medicine-chest.

"'A few drops of which,' Todd read from the volume, 'when dropped in a glass of water hath the peculiar property of detecting guilt or innocence in a man accused of crime, for, an' if the man be innocent of the deed accused, the draught in question will have no harmful effect upon him whatsoever, but, an' if the man be guilty of harboring sin against his fellow-man of the nature alleged, the drug will have the effect of closing up the arteries of the blood in such a manner that he shall gradually lose the ability of drawing his breath, and shall quite choke to death within a half-hour of so swallowing.'

"Now, in the case at hand, gentlemen," Todd continued, as he closed the volume and replaced it in the case, "one of you men is guilty of this proposed plan of stealing my stock here, after I had trusted him implicitly with its care. The other has simply fallen in with him from force of circumstances. One of the two of you has been the tempter and the other the tempted.

"I shall give each of you, therefore, a glass of water with a few drops of this mixture, the effects of which I have just finished describing, in it. I shall then separate you, so as to be able to get the required isolation necessary for the best of results, and patiently await developments."

A look of horror had been growing on the faces of the two men as a comprehension of Todd's plan dawned upon them.

"If either of you makes any resistance I shall consider him the guilty man." The Mexican licked his lips feverishly, but said nothing. The Indian showed no sign other than a nervous twitching of the muscles of the throat.

"Of course," Todd continued, "if you would prefer either of the other ways, I should be pleased to bow to your wishes in this, the last matter that the three of us should ever consider of a common interest. In the case of a public trial, of course you would both get off with your lives, but what would they be worth after twenty years in the penitentiary. In the case of my issuing invitations to a lynching-bee, the two of you would go, while, by giving my mixture a chance, the one of you pays his just debt, and the other is free to ride unmolested across the border. The more I think of the plan of letting the more guilty pay the debt, the more it appeals to me."

"He did it," said the Indian.

"Liar! He did it," replied the Greaser.

"Gentlemen, gentlemen," Todd urged soothingly, "there is no occasion for bosom friends having needlessly cruel words with each other at a time like this over the matter of responsibility. A small drink and fifteen minutes' waiting will decide the whole matter."

As he finished his harangue, Todd selected a couple of glasses from the cupboard, and half filled them with water from the bucket which sat on the shelf. He then unlocked the little wooden receptacle tacked up in the corner of the room, which served as a medicine-chest, and took out a half-pint flask of amber-colored liquid, and poured a spoonful in each of the glasses of water.

"This will be yours," and he held it to the lips of the Mexican, overcoming the latter's nervous indecision about drinking with a nudge from the muzzle end of the revolver. "And this will be yours," and he urged the other glass to the unwilling lips of the Indian in a similar manner. The Indian choked and spluttered, but managed to swallow the draught.

At one end of the room there was a little closet, which was used as a pantry. The Mexican was invited to step inside this pantry, and the door was shut and the bolt pulled to behind him, by Todd.

In the other end of the room was a similar addition in which it was Todd's intention at some future date to install a bath. The Indian was told to take his chair thence, and the spring lock snapped as the door closed on the half-breed. Todd then proceeded to the telephone in another room of the ranch-house and called up the sheriff at the county jail.

"Couple of cattle-thieves for you, Bill," he said, tersely, adding, "this is Todd."

"No," he replied to the inquiry from the other end of the wire. "No need to bring a squad; one man can handle them all right. Nothing but a Greaser and a half-breed."

Todd hung up the receiver, and taking the water-bucket went down to the spring for water. When he returned, he remembered that there was a Phoenix paper on the table of the livingroom which he had not yet read. He went in after it.

As he tore the wrapper off, he heard a sound from the pantry as of something falling to the floor.

"I guess I have given them enough of a scare," Todd said aloud, and laying down his paper he walked leisurely toward the pantry.

He opened the door. Just within lay the body of Pancho, the Mexican, in a huddled heap on the floor. Todd turned him over with difficulty, for he was drawn nearly double. No need to examine his pulse, for a lingering heart-beat. His distorted face told the story. He was dead.

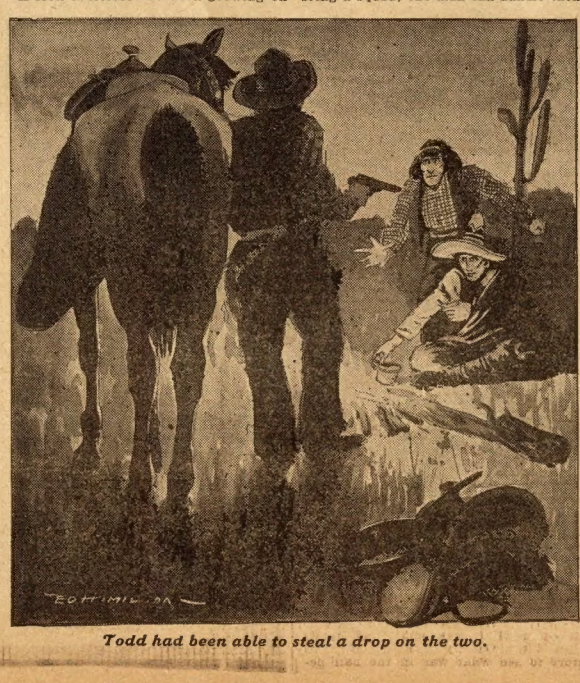
Todd turned and ran to the embryo bathroom. Sitting upright in the chair, with his eyes starting from their sockets and his tongue protruding from between his clinched teeth, as though his throat were in the hands of some unseen monster, was the body of Jose, the Indian. A shiver went down the spine of Todd, the rancher.

"Such is the power of imagination," he thought. He went over to the little box that served as a medicine-chest and took a stiff drink to steady his nerves until the sheriff's deputy would arrive to help him in caring for the bodies of his ex-attaches.

Oddly enough the stuff of which he poured himself three fingers' width in a drinking-glass was from the same bottle as the one he had made use of in concocting the test of the cattle-thieves. The label said: "Old Simpson' Whisky, Warranted thirty years old."

"Such is the power of imagination," Todd repeated to himself, as he went outside in the sunlight to wait for the deputy.

The End.



Todd had been able to steal a drop on the two.

His Fried Fish.

"What's that?" said Mr. Boynton, going to the front gate in response to Neighbor Jones' hail. "Some fish for us? Awfully obliged, I'm sure, and Mrs. Boynton will be, too. Say, they're beauties all right! Sea bass, aren't they? Great catch you had, wasn't it?" He bore his prize into the little bungalow with pleasant visions of fried fish for luncheon, but suddenly remembered that his wife would not return until one o'clock and that she had left things already prepared, to avoid cooking at the last moment. A bright idea occurred to him.

"Why don't I do 'em myself and give Bess a treat and a surprise? The boys say I can beat them all at camp cooking, and this gives me a chance to show off a bit. Let's see—I know where the pork is kept, but I'll have to find some flour."

The search lasted for some time, but finally he donned a big apron, rolled up his shirt-sleeves and went to work. In due time a platter full of beautifully browned fish reposed in the warming oven, and he went out on the porch to await in the rocking chair his wife's return. She came very soon, and he related his achievement as eager as a schoolboy for her surprise and approval. She displayed both in generous measure, especially when he exhibited his fish.

"Such a lovely shade of brown," she complimented him warmly, "and it was so clever of you to think of it! Now, get the salad out of the ice chest and I'll make the coffee and set the table, and we'll be ready in a jiffy."

Mr. Boynton beamed with modest pride and regarded the platter lovingly; but as an afterthought he remarked casually:

"I say, Bess, what makes you keep your flour in such an out-of-the-way place? I had an awful time to find it."

She paused, astonished. "Why, what do you mean? I keep it in the corner cupboard, with all the other supplies. It's the first thing you see when you open the door, in the big tin box on the lower shelf." She opened the door as she spoke and indicated the box. He stared for a moment, then crossed the room to a dresser and began rummaging among tools, nail boxes, and discarded glass cans in the under part. Emerging with a small screw-topped tin can, he opened it and displayed a powdery white substance.

"What do you call this, then?" he demanded in a tone in which triumph and anxiety were mingled. Mrs. Boynton took one look, then dropped into the kitchen rocker, helples with laughter, while he waited for an explanation.

"Oh, Jim," she finally gasped, "that's the plaster of paris that was left when we mended the Venus. How could you forget? Surely you didn't——"

"Yes," replied Mr. Boynton, gloomily, "that's just what I did. I fried 'em in that."

Help for the General.

A little girl who lives in Northfield, Mass., was going home from church one morning when she suddenly burst out with the words:

"Oh, mother! Couldn't father do something for General Benevolences, so that Mr. McConnell wouldn't have to beg for him before everybody in the church?"

The Disappearing Gold

(Continued from page two.)

bidding even than the storm without. Peeking over the high hedge of privet that faced the road, I saw the place set back about a hundred feet. Through a white, wooden gate a walk led to the broad veranda and the front door. Just beyond, another gate marked the wide road to the garage that stood in the rear of the house.

I tried the narrow gate, but found it locked. But nothing like that ever stopped me. I climbed cumbersomely over, and dropped with a grunt on the inside.

I could see the house better now. It was a substantial-looking place, but showed no sign of life. At every window

I beheld the daughter!

within sight heavy green shutters were fastened. I've seen the outside of Sing Sing, but, believe me, it doesn't look any more like a prison than this lonely, silent Hawthorne house looked that winter's night.

As I took a few noiseless steps toward the veranda, I heard a series of sighs. I felt just a bit creepy, until I discovered that they came from the rustling branches of the tall pines with which the house was surrounded.

There wasn't the sign of life any place about. I could see a light or two twinkling in the windows of the nearest house, but even that was a couple of blocks away.

At first I thought I'd go boldly up to the front door and ring. Then I concluded I'd reconnoiter a bit and learn a few things about the layout; because, it occurred to me, I might be driven off the grounds by a kennel of snapping dogs when I was discovered.

With only an occasional crunch, as my feet pressed the snow, I sneaked forward. The floor of the veranda creaked slightly as I stepped upon it, but I quickly made up my mind that the snapping wind drowned out any noise that I might make.

Close to the first window beyond the door, I detected between the thick slats of the shutters a faint light. But though I screwed and twisted my neck into all sorts of positions, I could make out nothing within the room.

Between lulls in the wind I listened intently for voices, but there were none. I was sure, however, that I heard a peculiar scraping as of a heavy body being drawn over a bare floor. It kept up continuously, but I simply couldn't imagine what caused it.

Balked at the first window, I wormed my way to the next and to the next, but ith no better success in trying to learn who or what was inside. In this way I circled the entire house. But, though I stuck my ear to every shutter, I couldn't catch the faintest sound——

That is, until I got back to the window beside the front door, through the thick slats on which I had seen the faint light. Then, in a lull in the wind, I distinctly heard a clink as of gold.

I forgot the cold that was stinging my ears and face, as I pressed against the window at this uncanny sound. I'm not so used to the clink of gold that it doesn't set me nervous. So you can imagine how I felt as, straining hard, I heard piece strike piece, as though heavy coins were being piled in an interminable heap.

If my eyes had been gimlets, they'd have bored those blamed shutters full of holes. But try as I might, I could not see a single thing within. Only when the steady fall of the gold ceased for a moment occasionally, I could plainly hear that peculiar scraping sound.

I certainly had my "nose for news" well tuned up about then, for I haven't forgotten yet how, standing out there on that bleak veranda with a fifty-mile gale from the Arctic sweeping down on me, I felt myself actually getting feverish with excitement. I wanted to get inside that house. I found myself forgiving Frisbie for bringing me out on a wild-goose chase. I knew now that there was a story inside this place of mystery, and I determined to get it, even if I had to turn burglar and break in.

But I tried the easier way first. I knocked boldly at the big front door. I had to knock with my knuckles, because the heavy brass hanger wouldn't work. I can remember it occurred to me that old Hawthorne probably had disconnected it to ward off the calls of inquisitive neighbors.

The first knock brought no response, but it stopped the steady clink of the piling gold. I've never been inside a tomb, but from all I've heard there is just about as much noise in one as there was in the hermit's house after my first rap.

I waited a moment without response. Then I beat the door again, this time long and vigorously. In the succeeding wait I heard a door open within. I imagined it let somebody into the hall to listen. I guess I was right, for after I had battered away for a third time, with violence enough to threaten the hinges, there came the bluff, stern voice of a man:

"What's wanted?"

There was something so forbidding in the tones that I had to pause before I could frame an answer.

"Does Mr. Hawthorne live here?"

"And what if he does?" was the blunt response.

"I'm very anxious to speak with him personally for a few moments," I sparred.

"Who are you, anyway?" the stern voice inquired, angrily.

"Open up and I'll tell you all about it," I promised.

"I'm not going to open my door to a strange man," came the decided announcement.

"I've come from the city—from New York to see Mr. Hawthorne."

"Well, I'm Hawthorne," blurted the voice. "What's wanted of me?"

"I can explain better if I can see you," I parleyed. "Besides, it's almighty cold out here."

"I didn't ask you to come out into it," snapped the unseen figure.

"Well I was sent out here to see you," I cried, for I was beginning to get angry myself by this time, "and I'm going to stay here until I do."

"You're likely to be a pillar of ice in the morning then," I could hear the man chuckle.

"Look here," I bluffed, playing my trump. "I'm a newspaperman come down here to find out about this robbery of yours, and I'm not going back to the city without it."

A single sharp cry from a woman's throat came to me through the door. It wasn't exactly a cry of pain or fear, but a mixture of both with surprise. It was just as if what I'd said about robbery had brought alarm to some one inside the house. And as I stood waiting for a reply to my last defiance, it came to me that it was the daughter who had made the outcry—that she had told about the loss of her father's gold in the village without his permission, or against his orders, and that she was frightened to have the news of it come back to him in this way.

"I tell you there hasn't been any robbery here," insisted the stern voice. I could almost feel the anger in it. And I could imagine the eyes he must have turned on his daughter. I began to feel that I ought to stay in order to see her through her impending scrap with the old man. He'd probably punish her for her revelation of the theft.

You know I never had much to do with skirts. But, say, as I stood there in that blizzard and thought of that cry and then recollected how the grocer's boy had tapped his head as if to say this girl's roof was upset, I felt hot all over. I wanted to get inside worse than ever to see her and maybe to protect her. So I made another bluff.

"Now, see here, Mr. Hawthorne, it'll be a good deal better for you to tell me about this and get it straight than for me to go back and print a lot of stuff I've heard down in Bellrose—most of which probably isn't right. But I'll print it if you don't open the door and let me hear your version."

Oh, I tell you we get them one way or another, eh? Hawthorne fell for the bluff without another protest. I heard a rattling of chains and a turning of the lock that grated as if it had long lain unused. Then the knob twisted and the door was opened about six inches.

I wanted a dozen pairs of eyes just about then. I could make out only the outlines of the figure that stood at the aperture. He was tall, that was sure, and slender, it appeared, too. I worked that old trick of sticking my foot in the doorway so that the door could not be closed until I was good and ready. Then I screwed my neck around in an effort to see what was in the hall behind the hermit. But it was all dark.

"Now, see here, young man," Hawthorne said through the crack, "don't go to printing things that are not so. I tell you there hasn't been any robbery here, and I ought to know."

Before I could get out another word, a sudden blast of the gale swept about me, and eddying into the house blew open a door that led into the room behind the shutters of which I had seen the light.

Standing silhouetted by the green-domed gas-lamp upon a table behind her, I beheld the figure of the daughter. One hand was clasped across her eyes, I could make out, while the other, pressed to the table, seemed to support her swaying form. She looked petite and graceful, and wisps of hair that fell about her ears shone just like the deep gold of a sunset.

A second blast sweeping into the room extinguished the light, just as the girl moved away from the table as if to close the door. But in the blackness, I saw staring out at me, apparently from the table, two round, yellow, forbidding eyes. Then the man at the door drove my foot from the aperture with a resounding kick on my shin, and I was left standing again in the cold to hear the bars and bolts being replaced within.

CHAPTER IV.

HOUSE BREAKING.

You know how McCabe used to tell me that if I was as good a writer as I was a "digger," I'd be a real star reporter. Well, that kick in the shin helped to make me the "digger" McCabe says I am. I can feel it yet. I limped off that veranda muttering a vow that I'd get at the inside of all this mystery if I had to stay out there till I froze to death, and I blamed near lived up to this vow.

Back to the gate I hobbled, stopping many times to turn and look back at the bleak house. Once I noticed a faint light at an upper window where a shutter hung open. The light was quickly extinguished, but in its place I imagined I saw a face pressed against the pane. Hawthorne was watching me, I concluded.

Reaching the road again, I paused, uncertain what to do. The wind was growing more biting, the snow was falling more heavily. Not a soul was in sight. Not a sound was to be heard, except the faint tinkle of a sleighbell off toward Bellrose. The night looked forbidding.

But I stuck to the job. Mixed a little strategy with it, too. Made a pretense of going down the road toward the village, so that if Hawthorne was still watching, he might think that I had decided to leave the vicinity. But as soon as I was out of range of his windows, I sneaked into the protection of a roadside hedge, and slowly crawled back until I was once more in front of the hermit's house.

I was mightly glad there wasn't a moon. Even the heavy snow made it uncomfortably light. But I kept close against the high, thick hedge in front of the somber place so that no one within could see me. I went as far as a huge, bare elm that stood inside a fence just beyond Hawthorne's place. Crouching in the snow behind the tree, I was fairly protected from the fierce wind, and also in a position to peek around and see every part of the hermit's house and land.

I waited, numbed and impatient, for nearly an hour. I cussed McCabe and I cussed Frisbie. Half a dozen times I concluded to give over my watch. Then I'd feel a twitch in the shin that my quarry had kicked, and I'd grit my teeth in a vow to see the thing out.

I was rewarded. Just as a church bell in the village began to toll what I took for seven o'clock, I noticed a flitting light in the lower windows of the house. It finally reached a rear door. That opened, and Hawthorne, swinging a lantern, stepped out and made for the garage. Before he swung its wide doors open, he looked carefully about. But I was quicker than he. The big elm tree thoroughly concealed me.

There was but a moment's wait. Then I saw the light within the garage increase as he lighted the lamps of his auto. In another moment came the chug-

(Continued on page thirteen.)

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Not His Fault.

Knicker—Jones got out of the wrong side of the bed this morning.

Bocker—He couldn't help it; it was a sleeping car and every side was wrong.

Very Poor Country.

"Yes, it's a poor country. None of us has a sou in the winter."

"How do you live then?"

"We lend each other a little."

Perfectly Respectable.

"Is he respectable?"

"Eminently so. He's never been indicted for anything less than stealing a railroad."

Well Paid.

Briggs—Kipling gets a dollar a word. That must be the record.

Riggs—No, here's a select councilman who got $20,000 for saying "Aye."

Our Moving Picture Show

The Mother Duck—The hunting season has begun, children! There comes a sportsman now, with his dog!

"Now remember how I told you to fly!"

The Sportsman—Those miserable aeroplanes will ruin the entire sport!

"I might as well go home. There don't seem to be any wild ducks nowadays."

Courtesy.

Visitor—I've just come from the doctor's funeral, but I didn't see any of you there.

Hostess—No, my husband didn't care to go, as funerals always upset him.

Visitor—If you never go to other people's funerals I don't see how you can expect them to come to yours.

That's Different.

"See here! You wrote a personal letter yesterday during office hours. You used your employer's time. That's stealing."

"Well, sir, I have worked overtime at least one hundred times per year for the past ten years."

"Ha! Hum! That's business."

Her Exact Words.

Housekeeper—How's this? You promised to saw some wood if I gave you a lunch.

Tramp—I recall no such promise, madam.

"The idea! I told you I'd give you a lunch if you'd saw some wood, and you agreed."

"Pardon me, madam. Your exact words were: 'I'll give you a lunch if you saw that wood over there by the gate.'"

"Exactly. That's just what I said."

"Well, madam, I saw that wood over there by the gate as I came in."

Sim Westover—Out west if a man steals even a cent he gets hard labor for life.

Dad Wilks—Same penalty as fer gettin' married, eh?

Disappointed.

Mrs. Newlywed—I think you are too mean for anything.

Mr. Newlywed—What's up now?

Mrs. Newlywed—You used to say you would die for me, and I've just found out that you haven't any insurance.

Time Enough.

Dora—So you have decided to break off your engagement with him?

Nora—Yes, but I don't think I shall do it until after my birthday—as it comes next week!

The Alumnus—Do you have a class yell in your barber college?

The Undergraduate—The subjects that we practice on do the yelling for us.

And the matrimonial game is apt to begin with cut glass and end with broken china.

Sarcastic.

An antiquated-looking individual was hawking fish.

"Fine fresh fish, fower a penny," roared he. A woman came to the barrow.

"Are they fresh?" she asked.

"They're fower a penny, mum," was the guarded reply.

"Yes," responded the other, "I heard you say so, but are they fresh?"

"Can't say for sartin, mum," came the sarcastic reply. "I applied for the birth and death certificate of every fish on the barrer, but at fower a penny it simply couldn't be done."

Corking Good Stuff.

"I want you to write a speech for me," said the politician to the newspaper man.

"About how long?"

"I don't know. I ought to talk about an hour and a half, I think."

"What do you want to discuss?"

"Nothing. I've got an old saying here: 'Money will not buy happiness.' Can't you string that out for an hour or two? It ought to make corking good stuff."

Vox Populi—Do you think you've boosted your circulation by giving a year's subscription for the biggest potato raised in the county?

The Editor—Nebbe not, but I got four barrels of 'em, b'goah.

Impossible, Though.

"You are going to inherit all my money," said the rich old man.

"Yes," sobbed the youth.

"I wish to goodness I could fix it so that you could also inherit my ability to take care of it," was the old man's last expression.

Sacrifice Required.

"Father," asked the small boy, "what does a man have to do to be a candidate?"

"Well, for one thing he has to get up enough patriotism to get out and deliver free of charge a lot of speeches that any lecture bureau would be glad to pay for."

Lige—Bet you can't guess wot I got in this bag.

Bige—Melons.

Lige—Good enough; but say, if ye can guess how many I got I'll gin ye both of 'em, b'goah.

Silas—I hear some wanderin' piano tuner knocked th' stuffin' out o' Hi Jones?

Hank—Yaas ye know what a feller Hi is fer gettin' th' wuth o' his money. Waal, he wanted th' tuner to throw in an ollin' o' th' windmill and a repairin' o' th' mowin' machine, all fer th' same money.

Making a Bid for Fame.

"Father, it's about time you began to wear a silk hat and grow side whiskers."

"For goodness sake, what for?"

"Well, you're getting in the sixties, you know, and unless you do something like that very soon the papers will never speak of you as one of the city's picturesque old citizens."

A Tactful Request.

Dobbleigh was a confirmed borrower, and, what was worse, he seldom returned the borrowed articles. He had held on to Whibley's umbrella, for instance, for nearly a year.

"And I'm blest if I know how I am ever going to get it back," said Whibley.

"Easy," said Hickenlooper. "Call a messenger and send Dobbleigh this note:

And he scribbled off the following: "Dear Dobbleigh: If you can spare it I'd like to borrow that umbrella of mine for a couple of days. Can you oblige me?"

Hiram—They tell me that there's a feller in the city that does nothing but train fleas.

Silas—Yep. I heard that he used to be a dog trainer, but one of the dogs bit him and he's doing it to get even.

Not So Rich.

"Please, miss," said a little boy one day with great boldness, "seems to me Solomon couldn't ha' been so rich after all."

"Why not, Dicky?" was asked.

"Well, you see, they say, 'He slept with his fathers.' Why, if he was rich, wouldn't he have had a bed all to himself?"

Art and Its Rivalries.

"I don't believe that story about Nero fiddling while Rome burned."

"Why?"

"Any true musician would have known better than to try to hold an audience while the fire department was turning out."

Wouldn't Do.

"Why do you permit your children to believe in fairies?"

"Well, I can't tell them there are no fairies and then expect them to believe in microbes."

She—And will you always be cheerful?

He—Darling, I'll always look as happy as the magazine pictures of the men using safety razors.

An Early Start, but—

"Mabel," said the girl's father, "I want to talk to you about that young man of yours. When did he say 'good night' to you last evening?

"At ten o'clock," replied the dear girl.

"What? Why, it was one o'clock at least."

"Oh, that was when he finished saying it."

Professional.

"So old Blackstone, the lawyer, objected to your calling on his daughter last night."

"Yes, but I knew how to fix it. I asked for a stay and it was granted."

Only One Obstacle.

Benevolent Person—You have been laid up for six months and unable to get work! What was your complaint?

The Man from Prison (mournfully)—Th' walls was too 'igh, kind lady.

Cause of His Success.

"How did he make all his money? Careful investments, I suppose."

"No. Careless investors."—Life.

Mrs. Smith—Did Maude's husband really say it wasn't safe for her to go out in the evening?

Mrs. Jones—He said it wasn't safe for her to go out until she had learned a little more about bridge whist.

A Yearning.

"You say you are sometimes a little lonely?"

"To a certain extent," replied Mr. Dustin Stax.

"But you are famous and sought after."

"After a fashion. But I can't help wishing more people would ask me to write in an autograph album—instead of a check book."

Before and After.

Mrs. Romance—In this novel, before they marry, she asks him not to give her those cold glances.

Husband (very brutal)—And, after they marry, he asks her not to give him those cold dinners.

Must Prepare the Way.

"Yes, she promised to be mine some day."

"But when?"

"She can't exactly say as yet. Seems she will first have to break off four or five other engagements."

Hopeful of Results.

"Your wife is taking a tremendous interest in abstruse questions."

"Yes," replied Mr. Meekton; "and I'm glad of it. Maybe it will result in her conversation's putting me to sleep instead of keeping me awake."

After Sizing Him Up.

The jury in the breach of promise case had just filed in.

The Judge—What is your verdict, gentlemen?

The Foreman—We award the plaintiff $250.

The Judge—Will the defendant stand up? I request the jury to look him over. And, now I want to ask your foreman if he punctuated that amount properly? Wasn't it $2.50? Very well; next case.

Bridget, Probably.

Husband—Did you drive all these nails yourself?

Wife—Yes, I did.

"Let me see your hands."

"Here they are—not hurt a bit."

"H'm! Who held the nails?"

Looking Ahead.

Proud Young Father—Isn't he a little beauty? What a pity he has that mark on his upper lip!

Proud Young Mother—Why, John, his mustache will hide that.

Costly Proposal.

Mollie—Did you ever propose to a girl in a taxicab?

Chollie—I did.

"What was the answer?"

"Sixteen dollars and forty cents."

A Cautious Father.

"Dad, can I take a post-graduate course in biology?"

"That depends, daughter," replied the old man cautiously. "What do you want to buy first?"

Si—Whar did you get the idea fer yer hair dressin'?

Miranda—That is what is known as the shredded wheat biscuit coiffure.

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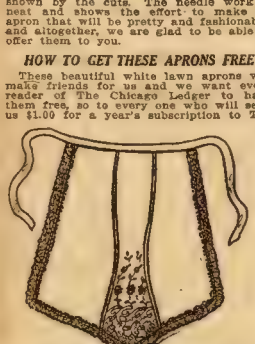

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Biffle and His Feet

By Ellis Parker Butler

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ONE of the most remarkable examples of the higher surgery has just been performed upon Artabanus Biffle, of Betzville, by Doc Weaver, our renowned cow doctor, and Artabanus is receiving the congratulations of his friends, including Aunt Rhinocolura Betz, who was unfortunate enough to lose her left leg at a time before Doc Weaver moved to our city.

Ever since childhood Artabanus has been so pigeon-toed that he could not put down one foot without stepping on the other. His usual pose when dormant was with the left foot on the ground and the right foot resting across the instep of the left foot. If he wanted to use his left foot he had to lift his right foot off it first, and hold the right foot in the air with one hand, so it would not go right back across the left one.

For a long while Doc Weaver wanted to operate on Artabanus's feet. He told Artabanus he was especially interested in this operation because he had never done one of the kind, and so had no one else, so far as he knew, so it would be mighty interesting. All he would have to do would be to cut off Artabanus's feet and sew them around and sew them back on again, but Artabanus said he hated to have his name in the papers, and that if the operation was successful it would be pretty sure to be written up, and if it wasn't successful his name would be mentioned in the obituary. So he put it off, and put it off, in his usual careless

His legs were spread out like compasses.

way, until one day he got his right foot cut off in his hay mower, and then he picked it up and rushed down to Doc Weaver.

Doc Weaver was as pleased as anything, and went right to work sewing the foot on, but Artabanus told him that he wanted the foot to toe out plenty this time. He said he had worn that foot toeing in long enough, and that as long as it could be put on any way he wanted it to toe out good and plenty. So Doc Weaver toed it out considerably, and when Artabanus left his bed he had two feet as good as ever, one toeing out and the other toeing in. This put his feet in parallel lines, for both pointed northeast, as you might say. The right foot toed out to the right, and the left foot toed in to the right, and there was only one trouble—Artabanus had to walk in circles, for his feet were always toed around toward the right.

It was a sad sight to see Artabanus coming down town in a hurry. He came in spirals. Sometimes when he was in a great rush he would not move forward at all—just rush around and around in a circle; to the right. If he went slowly, and took great care, he did not do much better—he was always hitting the other side of the street. Time and again, when he was out in his field, he would start for the other end of the field, and, every time, he would wind up just where he started from. Artabanus could not help it. He had to go the way his feet were headed. Often, when he was plowing, his team would start straight across the field and Artabanus would drop his reins and circle around back to the plow. It made plowing very slow.

But last month Artabanus had the good fortune to lose his left foot in a manner similar to that in which he lost the right, and he hurried down to Doc Weaver and had it sewed on. He made Doc slew his left foot around to the left, and when the job was done Artabanus had a stylish pair of feet. Instead of being pigeon-toed they pointed in opposite directions, one northeast and one northwest, as you might say, and Artabanus was as pleased as a child with a new toy. He stood and looked at those two feet with pride in his eyes, and then he cracked his heels together, which was a thing he had never been able to do in his life before. He shook hands with Doc Weaver warmly, and said he would settle his bill as soon as he marketed his crop, and then he started home. But his feet had got the habit of going in the direction in which they were headed, and now they were headed in opposite directions, and by the time Artabanus had taken four steps his legs were spread apart like a pair of compasses and at the next step something ripped and Artabanus came down with a whop! He got up immediately and tried it again, but it was no use, one foot went off northwest and the other went off northeast and when he had taken four steps Artabanus's legs were spread out like a letter A that has been mashed flat. Nothing Artabanus could do seemed to make any difference. No matter which way he wanted to go one foot went one way and the other foot the other way, until they could go no further, and then Artabanus would sit down hard. But he looked all right when he was standing still. So he tried walking backward, and his legs crossed like a letter X, and at the fourth step Artabanus sat down hard. It looked as if he could spend the rest of his life sitting down hard.

But Doc Weaver had been watching him thoroughly, and he suddenly spoke up and told him to try sideways, and Artabanus tried it. It was successful. So now Artabanus's feet look well, and he can make pretty good speed, sideways, but he shouldn't try to run. We all tell him so, but he will try it. The truth is that man was not made to run sideways. When Artabanus tries to run sideways he looks like the dickens. As near as I can explain it he looks like a shanghai rooster trying to polka.

* * *

To the Point.

E. R. Smith, formerly schoolbook man and now a farmer and fruit grower, tells a story of a boy's essay, written in a few seconds on the subject of suddenly coming into possession of wealth.

"The teacher instructed her pupils to write an essay on 'What I Would I Do If I Suddenly Became Possessed of $10,000?'" relates Mr. Smith, "and she warned them that their work was to be seriously considered. Papers and pens were passed, and it was only a few seconds until one boy began to squirm in his seat, appeared to be in hurry, and suddenly announced he had finished.

"'You're through already?' the teacher asked.

"'Yes, I'm through.'

"'Remember, now, I'm going to mark your essay very closely. It doesn't seem like you could finish such a subject so quickly.'

"'Go ahead; I'm ready,' the boy said.

"The teacher opened the folded paper and read:

"'What would I do if I suddenly became possessed of $10,000?'

"'Not a darned thing!'"

* * *

Humorless Women.

The Wandering Willie had received plentiful inward repairs at a generous farmhouse half a mile down the road, and when he came to the next he might have passed on, but he was in still further need, and he knocked at the kitchen door. A kind lady responded to his knock. He was such a ragged specimen that her heart was moved before he spoke.

"Why, you poor man!" she exclaimed. "Come into the house! We haven't got much just now, but you can have enough to keep body and soul together."

"Tain't that so much, lady," he replied, sticking out a foot in a dilapidated shoe, "as it is something to keep upper and sole together."

He laughed at his joke, but the woman did not. Women have no sense of humor. She slammed the door in his face.—Judge.

* * *

Never Again.

A Yonkers, N. Y., physician had a negro cook who was a chronic complainer. One day she came in groaning with a misery in her side, and the doctor offered to prescribe for her.

He went into the diningroom, poured out a spoonful of game sauce, stirred in some English mustard and sprinkled on some cayenne pepper, and handed the dose to the sufferer, telling her to take it down at one swallow.

It was two weeks or more before Mary turned up with a new pain. This time it was in her other side. Her employer offered to mix her another dose of his medicine.

"No, suh!" said Mary firmly. "I'm much obliged to you, doctor; but I'se done got my mind made up never again to drink nothin' what water won't squench!"

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The Disappearing Gold

(Continued from page nine.)

chug and then the whir of his motor as he cranked his machine. I crouched lower as the car was slowly backed out of the garage, but I could see that it was a very handsome and powerful one. It was not a limousine, though the tonneau was thoroughly protected from the weather by a leather top and glass sides. A cage of glass also afforded some protection for the chauffeur.

Hawthorne showed himself a skilful driver, by the quick and accurate way in which he turned the car about and drew it up at the rear door from which he had emerged. He closed the garage and disappeared within the house.

In another moment I saw the figure of a woman, bundled in furs, come out. There was no mistaking the resemblance to the petite, graceful figure I had caught a glimpse of through the front door. It was surely Miss Hawthorne who quickly slipped into the tonneau.

Following her came the father, bearing in his arms a burden that made me think it might be a baby. He certainly handled it gingerly enough. But though I scowled my brow and focused my eyes hard, I couldn't make out just what it was he deposited in the car with his daughter. But I was sure it was something alive. Else he wouldn't have been so blamed careful with it.

He locked the house door, tried the knob to see that it was thoroughly fastened, and then hopped into the chauffeur's seat. The wheels crunched through the snow to the wide front gate. There was something almost uncanny to me in the easy way that Hawthorne drove the long, gray, houndlike, powerful car along, and in the deftness with which he stopped it.

When he got down to open the gate he scrutinized the surroundings carefully—looking for signs of me, I suppose. But I cuddled close to the foot of that elm tree, and he didn't see a thing to disturb him. In another moment he was driving the car along toward the city at a sizzling rate.

As soon as I saw his tail lamps disappear, I got busy. Since he wouldn't let me into his house voluntarily, I was bound to get in by hook or crook. I'm an inquisitive chap on general principles. But the rebuff by the hermit and the kick in the shin he had given me simply made me wild to invade this gloomy place and see if I could find there some explanation for all this mystery popping up about me.

Funny, isn't it, what little things change a fellow's life? Now, if Hawthorne hadn't kicked me in the shin, I've often thought since that I wouldn't have been screwed up to doing the bold things that began with that night. But hold up, here. I'm getting ahead of my story.

Clambering over a picket fence, I broke across the snow-covered lawn to the veranda of the Hawthorne house. I tried the door. I tried the windows. But they were fastened as with steel.

Around the house I hustled, trying every pair of shutters. But not one of them could I budge. I got to the rear door, but this was an unpromising as the rest. The whole house circled unsuccessfully, I stood off to look at the upper story.

The chance of forcing an entrance here seemed to center in one window. That was the one over the front verandа, from which half a shutter swung loose, and out of which I imagined I had been watched when I first lert the premises. A faint light burned within—the only one I could make out.

"Well, here goes for my first job of housebreaking," I thought to myself. "And I've got to do it in a hurry, for there's no telling when those folks will be back."

From the garage I got a chisel and a long screw-driver, and slipped them into my ulster pocket. Going back to the front of the house, I found a tree growing close enough to it so that by climbing the trunk I could step onto the roof of the veranda and easily crawl to the window I aimed to force.

I was a pretty good climber when I was a kid, but it's a different proposition when you've taken on a lot of weight and are carrying a heavy ulter beside. For I couldn't leave the ulster behind. I would have given me away at once; whereas, if the folks came back before I got through with my inspection—you'll notice I'm using a soft word for it—I'd still have a chance to get away undetected and with all my duds.

Well, I climbed that tree all right, but I scraped my sore shin many a time and tore the skin from my hands in many a place. Creeping over the veranda, I reached the coveted window. It was locked within all right, but between the screw-driver and the chisel I pried loose the bolt and forced the sash up high enough to enable me to crawl within.

For just a minute I had some compunctions about this housebreaking. If I should be caught, it was likely to land me in jail. Or, if this man Hawthorne was a brutal fellow, as my talk with him at the door led me to think he was, he might plug me with a bullet. He could easily make out a case of provocation, but I took the chances and closed and bolted the window behind me.

The room into which I stepped was a bedchamber—a man's evidently, for I could smell faintly the odor of tobacco and by the dim light that came from a gas-jet turned low in the adjoining hall I saw a cigar stand on a table at the head of the bed, with a clump of stubs and ashes heaped upon it.

The furniture caught my eye instantly. It was mighty rich. The bed was a huge affair of mahogany with a carved head fit enough for a king's room. Dressing bureau, chairs and the heavy Oriental rug, that felt beneath my feet like a piece of soft plush, matched the bed.

"Well, this guy may be a hermit," I muttered to myself, "but it's a cinch he's no miser.

From the bedroom I sneaked into the hall, ears sharply set to discover whether any one had been left in the house. But there wasn't a sound except the rattling of the shutters and the sough of the pine trees in the wind without.

Half a dozen doors opened off this hall, which extended the depth of the house, with a stairway at the rear end leading to the attic. I turned up the flickering gaslight and then, digging into an inner pocket for a supply of matches, I proceeded to examine one room after another.

They were all bedrooms except the last one. The fittings were rich as anything I had ever seen. I spotted the girl's room, because it was all in white and gold and a couple of shimmering gowns lay spread across the counterpane. I can remember, too, how a quick glance around the walls showed half a dozen different pictures of the Madonna in dainty gilt frames hanging there. Their sad eyes all seemed to be looking squarely at me.

The last room was a small affair in the rear. It was apparently a workshop, for a bench stood against one wall fitted with lathe and emery wheel. On its top was strewn a varied assortment of tools, and all of them, I noticed in the thin glare of the matches I struck, were small and delicate.

I was about to turn away in some doubt when a scintillating flash from the top of the bench caused me to pause. I turned on the gas-jet against the wall just above it and applied a match. In the steady light I started as I beheld the glint of not one but half a dozen blue diamonds of carat size set in a heavy gold bracelet.

I picked the jewel up carefully, making it a point to remember the exact spot and position so that when I replaced it, there would be no indication that it had been disturbed. It took only the shortest inspection to show that the bracelet was very valuable. It was elaborately and beautifully chased to make a background for the diamonds. I'm no judge of values in jewelry, but I reckoned I was conservative in putting the worth of this ornament at close to a thousand dollars. I know my fingers tingled as I handled it. It was the most expensive piece I'd ever inspected.

But my greatest surprise came when I looked at the inner side. It occurred to me that so valuable a piece of jewelry would be marked in some way. It evidently had been, too, for on a spot discolored in a brownish red as if some one had tried to obliterate them with powerful acids and sharp tools were the indistinct remains of a few letters in script.

I held the bracelet close to the light in the effort to make out the letters, but they were indecipherable. Then as I carefully replaced the jewel on the bench, it struck me as mighty peculiar to find it there. And why should anybody want to wipe out the marks of its ownership? A flush ran through me as I thought that only a thief would want to do that. A thief? Could Hawthorne be a thief? Preposterous. Who ever heard of a thief living in a home as elegant as this was inside?

Turning out the light, I left the workroom and hurried along the hall and down the wide stairway that led to the first floor. At the bottom, as I lighted a match upon my trousers, I realized that I had not tightly closed the workshop door. I was about to turn back when I heard the crunch of snow without.

"They're coming back," I thought. "I've got to get out of here."

I hustled to the front door and set an ear against the crack. The sound without was clearer. I could hear the steady throb of a motor that I knew must be turning in at the gate. In the darkness I fumbled with the chains and the lock, but they balked me.

As I heard the car draw up at the rear door and stop, I suppose I felt just like a burglar does when he realizes that he is about to be trapped. With a desperation that I had never felt before in my life, I opened the door into the room where earlier in the evening I had first detected a light. A dull green glow permeated the apartment, cast from the gaslamp turned low on a center table.

I glanced hurriedly and anxiously about. The room was richly, even sumptuously, furnished in mahogany and satin. A grand piano stood in one corner. Imposing canvases, hung deep in shadow boxes, adorned the walls. Silken rugs strewed the polished floor.

The piano appeared to afford the best hiding-place. As I fell to my knees and started to crawl beneath it, I heard the stern voice of Hawthorne. He was saying, "Be quiet, be quiet!"

The next instant the rug slipped away from my feet, and I sprawled forward on the floor. One hand outstretched before me struck an encumbrance. I ran my fingers along it, and found it appeared like a door cut in the floor.

For the second time since I had broken in my hair bristled. I pressed the spot, and was surprised to feel it give slowly away. I crawled quite close to the edge, and found the opening large enough to admit me, ulster and all. Feet first I lowered myself through the cavity.

"I don't know where I'm going," I thought, "but I'm sure on my way."

A foot struck the rung of a ladder. I quickly settled myself upon it, and then by rapid steps descended. As I disappeared beneath the level of the floor, the trapdoor, evidently set with springs, swung slowly back into place.

My eyes could not penetrate the blackness of my retreat. A peculiar odor attracted me. I can recall now that it made me think I had gotten into the den of some wild animal. I felt for the matches in my pocket, but I paused short when I heard the tread of feet in the room above.

The continuation of this remarkable story will be found in the Ledger issue of next week. If you are not a regular subscriber to the Ledger we would like to have your name on our list. The Ledger is only $1.00 a year, and we have stories awaiting publication that you cannot afford to miss.

SALLOW FACES

Often Caused by Tea and Coffee Drinking.

How many persons realize that tea and coffee so disturb digestion that they produce a muddy, yellow complexion?

A ten days' trial of Postum has proven a means, in thousands of cases, of clearing up a bad complexion.

A Washn. young lady tells her experience:

"All of us—father, mother, sister and brother—had used tea and coffee for many years until finally we all had stomach troubles more or less.

"We all were sallow and troubled with pimples, breath bad, disagreeable taste in the mouth, and all of us simply so many bundles of nerves.

"We didn't realize that tea and coffee caused the trouble until one day we ran out of coffee and went to borrow some from a neighbor. She gave us some Postum and told us to try that.

"Although we started to make it, we all felt sure we would be sick if we missed our strong coffee, but we tried Postum and were surprised to find it delicious.

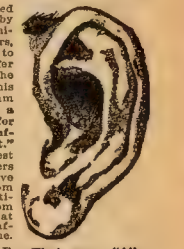
"We read the statements on the pkg., got more and in a month and a half you wouldn't have known us. We all were able to digest our food without any trouble, each one's skin became clear, tongues cleaned off, and nerves in fine condition. We never use anything now but Postum. There is nothing like it." Name given by Postum Co., Battle Creek, Mich.

"There's a reason," and it is explained in the little book, "The Road to Wellville," in pkgs.

Ever read the above letter? A new one appears from time to time. They are genuine, true, and full of human interest.

FORCED BY GRATITUDE

of Hundreds to Repeat His Offer of March 30th in The Chicago Ledger.



I have been so moved the past few weeks by the gratitude of Chicago Ledger Readers, that I have decided to make again the offer which I made in the March 30th issue. This is what I said: "I am going to **Give Away a Free Treatment for Deafness, to every sufferer who asks for it."**

The letters of request have poured in; letters of grateful thanks have also poured in. From every part of the continent, the people whom I have cured of that terrible affliction—Deafness—are thanking me.

A letter from the Far West says, "Allow me to thank you a thousand times for the good hearing you have restored to me." A letter from New England says, "I bless the day I saw your offer, for you have cured me of Deafness."

Deafness Treatment Free

These many letters of gratitude have touched my heart, and so I say again to the readers of The Chicago Ledger: "I will give away a Free Treatment for Deafness to every sufferer who writes for it."

This offer can only be made for a very short time. If you are Deaf, or have any trouble with your ears, write for a Free Treatment. **This treatment is entirely free.** I want to help you. I know what you suffer in the approach of Deafness, and the intolerable agony of complete Deafness. I know that I have cured many, many people who were Deaf. I want you to have the same opportunity to hear again. **Write today for my treatment for Deafness.**

Send off now, a post card or letter request. Don't delay, or it may be too late. If you have even the slightest feeling that something is wrong with your ears, be on the safe side and **send for treatment.** It won't cost you anything. If you are growing Deaf, and have become discouraged and tired of experimenting, profit by the example of those who have been cured by my treatment. Many of these people thought that they never could be cured, they had tried so many different things which never did them any good. My treatment restored their hearing.

Write today, for a Free Deafness Treatment, to **Deafness Specialist Sproule, 306 Trade Building, Boston, Mass.**

FAT AND FUSSY?

I was FAT, Fussy and uncomfortable, but reduced myself to normal graceful lines, without the aid of Drugs, Exercise, Diet, Sweating, Harmful exercises, or other foolishness. My drugless method will do the same for you, easily, secretly, safely and surely. Write for my FREE book that tells how. A postal card will do. Write to-day. Hattie Biel, 278 Barclay, Denver, Colo.

$25 A DAY Moving Picture Business

FREE Catalog

Learn $150 to $200 a week easily in the moving picture business. No experience needed. Pays right from the start. Big cash profits. $25 and up a night exhibiting in churches, theaters, etc., in your own neighborhood. Pleasant, easy work.

$50 to $75 Starts You complete with one of our machines. We supply everything: rent, films, teach you all. Great Opportunity. Ambitious men write quickly. Full information free.

Capital Merchandise Co.,
Dept. 41 440 S. Dearborn St., Chicago

TOBACCO HABIT CURED

Prescription sent absolutely free by Mrs. J. Kay, Room Z, Haymarket Building, Chicago, Ill.

No More Paring on 50,000,000 Corns

Some time ago a chemist discovered how to completely end a corn.

He made a wax—the B & B wax—which forms the heart of a Blue-jay plaster.

This little plaster has since then removed fifty million corns.

It is applied in a jiffy, and the corn pain ends at once. Then the B & B wax gently loosens the corn. In 48 hours the whole corn comes out, root and all.

No soreness, no discomfort. You feel nothing at all.

People who pare corns get just a few days' relief. To get it they run the constant risk of infection.

The millions who use Blue-jay never suffer or wait. They get rid of the corn in two days.

Get Blue-jay and prove it, as they did.

A in the picture is the soft B & B wax. It loosens the corn.
B protects the corn, stopping the pain at once.
C wraps around the toe. It is narrowed to be comfortable.
D is rubber adhesive to fasten the plaster on.

Blue-jay Corn Plasters

Sold by Druggists—15c and 25c per package

Sample Mailed Free. Also Blue-jay Bunion Plasters (154)

Bauer & Black, Chicago and New York, Makers of B & B Handy Package Absorbent Cotton, etc.

Chicago Ledger

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SUBSCRIPTION RATES.

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BACK NUMBERS.

Back numbers of the Ledger can be had by addressing this office. Always give the numbers desired, plainly written, accompanied by your full address, and your order will receive prompt attention. Price 5 cents per copy.

BEWARE OF STRANGERS.

The Ledger employs no traveling agents to solicit subscriptions, and every person working in that capacity is a fraud. No person is authorized to take subscriptions for the Ledger unless he or she be well known in the city or village where they have been appointed agents to sell this paper every week. A liberal reward will be paid for evidence that will enable us to arrest and convict such persons as are now traveling from town to town in different sections of this country, claiming to be agents of the Ledger and thereby defrauding the people. Beware of strangers.

ADVERTISING.

Advertising rate $2.25 per Agate Line, per insertion for advertisements in the The Chicago Ledger and The Saturday Blade combined. These two weeklies have an average circulation of

1,000,000

COPIES WEEKLY.

GENTLE JABS.

The flighty girl may not be angelic.

Even a love match may have its flare-ups.

The life of a good woman is a living sermon.

A one-sided view is all right if it is the right side.

Enthusiasm is one thing and hustle is another.

Cold treatment often kindles a flame of resentment.

A kitten is almost as frisky and senseless as a flirt.

I O U are vowels that have caused many a man's downfall.

Look out for the cars—even if you are on the right track.

A glutton is a man who eats as much as a small boy wants.

Always remember to be a gentleman—unless you are a woman.

Keeping a husband in hot water is a poor way to preserve him.

Some men sow wild oats and then hope for a bumper wheat crop.

If a man has brains he is seldom called upon to submit the proof.

It is safer to throw bouquets at the dead than mud at the living.

Marriage sometimes forms a man's character and sometimes reforms it.

A man ceases to be a good husband when he begins to feel sorry for himself.

It's easier to lead some men to drink than it is to drive them away from it.

If you want to know how old a married woman is, ask her husband's sister.

All women are more or less credulous, and some have faith in their husbands.

Occasionally we meet an ordinary man who has no more friends than a baseball umpire.

More young men might manage to earn a living if their fathers declined to do it for them.

Even a leap year girl should never sit in a man's lap without first asking his permission.

Every woman is sorry for some other woman because of what her husband told her about the other woman's husband.

If G. Washington was never asked by a fond mother what he thought of her cute baby, then it may be true that he never told a lie.

Off for an Outing.

"Never mind about your handkerchief!"

"Come on; come on! Heavens! It is now 7:28, and the train leaves at 7:55."

There goes papa. See how flustered he is, says the Galveston News. He has a big suitcase in each hand and his knees are wabbling under their weight.

Behind him is mamma with a basket of lunch, a small grip and four umbrellas standing out at all angles.

Big sister is just behind with a mouthful of hairpins, and right at her heels are the four children, carrying all sorts of things and giggling, as all children giggle at times of stress such as this.

"There comes the car, papa! Run and stop it! Tell the man we'll be right there."

"Hey; hey! Stop the car! Just a minute, conductor, they'll be here in a second. There they come—that's them. Hurry up!" (Clang-clang!)

"Well, we caught it, Conductor, will this car get to the union depot in time for the 7:55 train? Due at 8 o'clock? Due at 8 o'clock! Can't you make the motorman hurry up, there's a good fellow."

There's the depot in the distance. See the family get ready to sprint as soon as the car slacks up. Two of the boys take the kid, one holding each arm, and papa girds up his loins, so to speak. Now, then!

Down the steps clatters the family, whooping and wheezing. It rushes up to the iron gate, where stands a calm person with a blue cap.

"Let us through! We want the 7:55 train!" The calm person in the blue cap looks over the agonized faces toward the roof.

"Number four one hour late," he says, briefly.

Then mamma looks at papa. Papa decides he wants a cigar, and you can't smoke in comfort in a depot.

And mamma takes the family and the baggage and caches them in the waiting-room.

One hour late! One hour to wait in this stuffy place! Oh, papa. But papa is outside somewhere with his cigar. He will appear when the train is called, and not before. Depend upon that.

Wanted A Chance.

One day, the story runs, when Jim Hill was going in the railroad business and the Great Northern was not the fine system it is today, he was met in St. Paul by the head of a big steamboat company doing business on the Great Lakes.

"Jim," said the steamboat man, "I'll match one of my boats against one of your trains in a fair race for one thousand dollars a side."

Mr. Hill hesitated. "I don't know," said he; "some of your boats are pretty fast."

"I'll race you upstream," added the steamboat man, as a further inducement.

"Oh!" exclaimed the other, in a disgusted tone; "if you're going to stick to the river then you might as well give up the notion of any race. I thought you meant you'd bring your boat out on the prairie alongside the track and give me some show."

Would Be There.

Senator Bailey, apropos of Independence day, told at a dinner in Gainesville a story of the Civil War.

"Once during this war," he said. "Senator Wigfall, a member of the Confederate Congress from Texas, fell in with a party of Union soldiers.

"The Senator, being well disguised, conversed freely with the Unionists, asking them, among other things, 'what they'd do with old Wigfall if they caught him.'

"'We'd string him up,' the soldiers answered promptly.

"'Serve him right, too!' said Senator Wigfall; 'and, by gum, if I were there, I'd be pulling on one end of the rope myself.'"

Heirlooms.

"And is this an heirloom, too?" asked the visitor, picking up a brick that lay on the center table.

"Yes," said the lady of the house. "That is the brick my mother threw at the prime minister."

"Ah, indeed, how very interesting," said the visitor. "And whose portrait is that on the wall?"

"That is my mother herself," said the lady.

"I see," said the visitor. "The power behind the thrown, as it were."

Gentlemen Ever.

The national monetary commission was arranging for the settlement of its bill at the Plaza, preparatory to departure.

"Are you leaving, gentlemen?" inquired Chevalier Galbray, the room clerk, who is always surprised when anybody leaves."

"Yes," replied Representative Weeks, who comes from Boston. "We arrived gentlemen and we are leaving gentlemen." And up to a late hour the office staff had not recovered.

WANT ADS

Want and Classified Advertising not less than 14 words accepted for insertion in the Ledger and Blade at 25 cents per word.

AUTOMOBILES FOR SALE

USED Mitchell Cars for sale by makers, $450 up. Fully rebuilt. $10,000,000 guarantee. Ship C. O. D to responsible people. Get particulars quick. Mitchell Automobile Co., Dept. H., 2234 Michigan ave., Chicago.

AUTOMOBILE and motorcycle tours—350 trips over best roads every State; fifty-six pages maps and road directions; 15 cents postpaid. Motor Tours Co., 51 Chambers street, New York.

MOTORCYCLES

MOTORCYCLE Manual—Motorcycle construction and operation illustrated and described; best trouble charts; complete motorcycle Trade Directory; 128 pages; cloth-bound, 50 cents; paper cover, 25 cents. Motorcycle Manual, 51 Chambers street, New York

AGENTS WANTED

AGENTS—Men and Women; sell guaranteed Hosiery. Credit plan helps you. The line that repeats. Exclusive agency to hustlers. Dept. B 1., Lehr Mfg. Co., Denver, Colo.

STARK BROS, Louisiana, Mo., Big Ideas in tree selling. Best terms known to nursery world. Box 80

AGENTS write for unparalleled special offer, six pair Triplewear Hose Free. Big money selling Triplewear Hosiery, beautiful line; guaranteed six months. Triplewear Mills, Dept. K. 13th & Sansom, Philadelphia.

WANTED—a representative in every town to sell an article necessary in every home. Profitable proposition for right party. Address Protecto, 545 John R., Detroit, Michigan.

AGENTS' Repeater, costs 5c, sells for 50c to $1. Sample free. Thunder Laboratory, Ferris, Illinois.

$50 weekly, any town, no canvassing. Particulars free. Schoenfield, 3620 Raymond st., Houston Texas

CANVASSERS and Agents Wanted everywhere for Hosiery, Neckties, and six other staple necessities Samples and goods furnished on credit. No money required. The Direct Co., 11 South st., Boston, Mass.

FIVE Dollars per hundred for collecting names and addresses. All or spare time, stamp for particulars. Penn Sales Co., Darby, Penn

AGENTS sell guaranteed Hosiery for Men, Women and Children. Guaranteed four months. Big profits, lowest price. Write quick for terms. Anchor Hosiery Co., Desk 53, Dayton, Ohio.

REMNANT STORE, Cincinnati. Great Bargains in fine, quick-selling remnants. Agents and storekeepers supplied.

HELP WANTED

MEN to learn the Automobile trade. Apply Mr. D. Scanlin, Business Manager, Grever College of Motoring, 1468 Wabash ave., Chicago, Ill.

LEARN to make Mirrors; make big money. Particulars for stamp. MacDonald, 124, Peru, Ind

WANTED—Active man in each locality. To join this Society. And introduce our Memberships. Sick, accident, death benefits. All or spare time. Must be $500 a month. Write, Box N. L. 293, Covington, Ky.

WANTED—Men and women for Government positions. $80.00 month. Annual vacations. Short hours. No "layoffs". Common education sufficient. Over 12,000 appointments coming. Influence unnecessary. Farmers eligible. Send postal immediately for free list of positions open. Franklin Institute, Dep't. D 31, Rochester, N. Y.

GOVERNMENT Post Office Examinations everywhere soon. Get prepared by former U. S. Civil Service Examiner. Write for Booklet B. Patterson Civil Service School, Rochester, N. Y

LEARN to write advertisements—Earn $25 to $100 weekly. We can positively show you by mail how to increase your salary. Prospectus free. Page-Davis Co., Dept 77, Page Bldg., Chicago, Ill

FEMALE HELP WANTED

LADIES can make shields at home; $10 per 100; work sent prepaid to reliable women. Particulars for stamped addressed envelope. Eureka Co., Dept. 17. Kalamazoo, Michigan

MAKE a comfortable living at home sewing plain seams. Any ordinary sewing machine. All or spare time. No canvassing. Steady. Sewers wanted in each town. No triflers reply. State how much time can sew. Send ten cents postage for samples, etc. Returned if not satisfactory. Home Sewers Company, New York Jobbers Sewing, 'BL' Dept. Rehoboth, Delaware

TYPEWRITERS

TYPEWRITERS—All makes $10 up. Free trial. Guaranteed two years. Express prepaid. Francke Payne Company, Rosedale Station, Kansas City, Kansas.

FOR WOMEN

LADIES—Be your own masseur. Complete instructions and two formulas for 10c. Have 20 years success with these formulas. Course of instruction makes you beauty specialist. You can make big money. Box 298, Springfield, Ohio.

LADIES—All for thirty cents (in silver or one or two cent stamps.) 1 box All button-hole cutter and ripper 25c; cherry pitter 15c; strawberry huller 10c; lamp burner holder 10c; dainty milk bottle opener 5c. Home Advrg. Co., Danbury, Conn.

BOYS AND GIRLS

BOYS and Girls—For one hour's work, you can earn a Fountain Pen, Watch, Rifle, Doll, Ring, etc. Write today. Sterick Specialty Co., Box 1041, Warren, Pa.

FARMS FOR SALE

FRUIT LANDS—Beautiful Kootenay Valley, B. C.; 88 acres, subdivided into 2 4-acre tracts, 11 of 5-acres and one of 25 acres. The 25-acre tract is improved, has dwelling, stable, ice-house, etc. All for a limited time at the low price of $6,000. Adjoining land held at $200 per acre. Will cost you nothing to write and investigate. Owner forced to realize thereon. ¼ cash, balance easy terms. Only six hours from Spokane, Wash. Pure water, ideal climate and very low taxes. Address D. B. Dulmage, Morgan Park, Illinois

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

MEN and Women—If you are ambitious and would like to make money in a business of your own, write us. Prospectus Free. The Prahach Institute, Dept. B-W., Lebanon, Pa.

$5.00 a Week will start you in a big money-making mail order business—with the best line—in spare time. Particulars free. Antiseptic Mfg. Co., 1865 Barry avenue, Chicago.

BIG INDUCEMENTS made to small factories locating in Kenton, Ohio, by Commercial Club. Harry Hopwood, Secretary.

SURPRISINGLY small capital starts exceptional clean and profitable mail order business. Protected merchandise, unlimited market, systematized selling plan. Details free. Expert, 411, Home Bank, Baltimore, Md.

MISCELLANEOUS

FASCINATING Photos—Samples 10c. Dandy book catalogue for Stamp. Duff Company, 2713 Mozart, Chicago.

BARGAIN—Three fine neckties $1. Gold-plated Pin free. Ties and pin retail at $2.50. This offer is for short time only. Send $1 at once. Money refunded by return mail if not satisfied. Name colors desired. W. C. Watkins, Parnassus, Pa.

PICTURES, Drugs, Books, etc. Gentlemen like. 30 samples, 10c postage. List 2c. Ord, Long Beach, Calif.

HEALTH AND MEDICAL

DRINK HABIT—Guaranteed home treatment—three days—Write for result. The only reliable. Book mailed free. Edw. J. Woods, 534 Sixth Avenue, M 356, New York, N. Y.

FITS—I cured my daughter. Doctors gave her up. Will send free. Give express office. A. Lepso, Milwaukee, Wis.

DROPSY. I cure Dropsy. Swelling reduced in one week. Address, Dr. John T. Patterson, Dropsy Specialist, Atlanta, Ga.

ASTHMA—Shortness of Breath, Seifact cures others and will cure you. Package 50 cents. Levering, 3612 Stokley st., Philadelphia, Penn.

PERSONAL

MARRY: Catalogue with photos and descriptions Free. Many pretty suited. Select Club, Dept. 674, Tekonsha, Mich.

INTERESTING Books and Den Photos: 10 photos, 10c, Cat. free. Bond Pub. Co., C 2, Columbus, Ohio.

TELL your future by handwriting. Send birthdate and dime. Madame Walker, 506 W. 146 st., New York City.

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Intrinsic Values.

"Why did you select Charles instead of George?" asked Maude.

"Well," replied Mayme, "George said I had eyes like violets, cheeks like wild roses, shell-like ears and lips like cherries."

"Very pretty."

"Yes. But Charles said I had eyes like diamonds, teeth like like pearls and lips like rubies. It seemed to me that his ideas were much more practical."

A CURE FOR RUPTURE

Success Attained at Last—How Trusses May Be Thrown Aside.

Those who are afflicted with hernia and who have been compelled to wear torturing trusses, will be pleased to learn that a valuable and interesting book has been issued, of which a copy will be sent free to any rupture sufferer who writes to its author, Dr. Rice, 1045-N Main Street, Adams, N. Y. It tells you how a person may be speedily and lastingly rid of rupture in any form and gives much other important advice of true worth.

Pitfalls of Language.

"I'm going to ride at the country," said a Frenchman, whose English was not very perfect, to a friend.

"You should say ride in the country," remarked the friend.

"Ah! yes—very good," responded the Frenchman, "and when I come back I will knock in your door."

Free Asthma and Hay Fever Cure.

D. J. Lane, a chemist at 115 Lane Bldg., St. Marys, Kansas, manufactures a remedy for asthma and hay fever in which he has so much confidence that he sends a $1 bottle by express to any one who will write him for it. His offer is that he is to be paid for it if it cures, and the one taking the treatment is to be the judge.

LADIES, PRESERVE YOUR YOUTHFUL APPEARANCE.

Madame Mignette's Beauty Cream and Skin Food removes every defect, spot, freckle, pimple, blemish or wrinkle, leaving the skin soft, clear and smooth. It is perfectly harmless and will not injure the most delicate skin. It preserves and brings back the youthful glow to the face and ruddiness to the cheeks, preserving it to this condition until extreme old age. This preparation has been used for years, and hundreds are now using it and are more than delighted with the results. Send us ten (10) cents for formula which you can have filled at any drug store at a very small cost. Do not delay, but write at once. Box 491, Blairsville, Pa.

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Nowhere can you get such long time to pay for a high grade, guaranteed-for-25-years, Piano as we give on this superbly built Sweet-Toned Schmoller & Mueller Art Style 60. You can get now our unequaled selling plan from factory to you. No middlemen to pay. Our plan tells how by saving only 16⅔c. a day you can become the proud possessor of a sweet-toned, guaranteed-for-25-years Schmoller & Mueller Piano. On our easy payment plan and reasonable prices you can have placed in your own home at once a beautiful sweet-toned

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The Schmoller & Mueller Player Piano, 88 note, plays the entire keyboard by means of foot treadle and rolls of music.

Our Special Summer Prices. To those who write now we will give our special summer prices and tell of our special representative plan.

Fill out this Coupon today for either a piano or player piano catalogue. Full information will be sent back to you by the first mail.

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BEAUTIFUL BUST

How to Get a PERFECT FORM

50c Box FREE

We want to send you free a 50c package of Dr. Catherine E. Kelly's wonderful treatment for making the bust plump and firm; also our booklet, "The Perfect Figure" Dr. Kelly used this treatment herself and increased her own bust measurements from 4 to 7 inches. Write to-day and enclose 10c to help pay distribution expenses, and a 50c treatment will be mailed at once in plain package.

DR. KELLY CO., Dept. 92 GB, Buffalo, N.Y.

THIS THIN MODEL 20 YEAR WATCH $3.75

Elegant hunting case beautifully engraved, gold finished or roughcut, stem wind and stem set, fitted with 7 jeweled American made movement, guaranteed 20 years, with long gold finished chain for Ladies, vest chain or fob for Gents.

$3.75

20 Year Guarantee

DO NOT BUY UNTIL YOU SEE IT. Let us send it C O D for examination at your nearest express office, and if you think a bargain and equal in appearance to any $15.00 gold filled watch pay the express agent our special sale price $3.75. Mention if you want Ladies', Men's or Boys' size.

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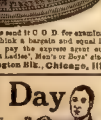
Make $20 a Day

With our "DIAMOND" Machine. Takes Photo Post Cards and Buttons "WITHOUT NEGATIVES." Anybody can operate. PRICE $7.50 AND UP. Circulars mailed free. Write Dept. 27.



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Looks so much like a real $100 diamond in size, cut and flash that without close examination even experts can't tell which is genuine. Sent free, either mail or pin, to advertise our jewelry—the finest of its kind on the market. We will forward this Genuine Arabian Diamond absolutely free, together with our big new Illustrated catalog fully describing our entire line and our special plan of wholesaling direct to you, immediately upon receipt of 5c to cover postage, packing, etc. Write Ovington & Co., 330 So. Dearborn Street Wholesale Jewelers. Same price to public as to jewelers. Chicago Ill.

Wizard Repeating LIQUID PISTOL

Nickel-plated 5 inch long. Pat'd

Will stop the most vicious dog (or man) without permanent injury. Perfectly safe to carry without danger of leakage. Fires and recharges by pulling the trigger. Loads from any liquid. No cartridges required. Over six shots in one loading. All dealers, or by mail, 50 cents. Pistol with rubber-covered Holster, Six Holster Separate, 10 cents. Money order or U. S. stamps. No coins. Address PARKER, STEARNS & CO., 296 Sheffield Avenue, Brooklyn, N. Y.

WANTED SOLDIERS' HOMESTEADS

Union Soldiers who homesteaded some land, but less than 160 acres before June 23, 1874, are entitled to additional rights even though entry was relinquished or abandoned. If soldier is dead, widow or heirs have his rights.

I Pay Spot Cash for These Claims.

Address (Comrade) W. E. MOSES,
436 Jacobson Building, Denver, Colo.

ANECDOTES OF PEOPLE

Needed Reading Glasses.

An optician said, when humor was mentioned: "My business sees fun occasionally. I had a case myself a day or two ago. An old darky came into the store and said he wanted a pair of spectacles. The clerk tried one lens on his eyes, and pointed to the paragraphs on a piece of cardboard. 'Can you read that?' he asked. 'No, sah,' replied the darky. The customer tried another pair, and many others, declaring he could not read with any of them. Finally the clerk, out of patience, asked, 'Well, say, can you read at any time?' The negro smiled broadly and answered: 'No, sah, that's why I wants glasses. My wife she read yo' advertisement sayin' as how anybody could read with yo' glasses, so I thought I might as well come an' try 'em all.'"

If Forever, Then Forever.

A young man recently received the following letter:

"Dear Harry:—What I am about to write to you almost breaks my heart. Mother and father, for some unaccountable reason, simply detest you. Therefore, I think, dear, that you had better not call any more. So, good-by forever. Your broken-hearted little girl,

"MAUD."

"P. S.—When it is fine, I walk in the park every afternoon at three."

At the Polls.

During a city election in New York a bunch of trained repeaters marched into an East Side polling place.

"What name?" inquired the election clerk of the leader, who was red-haired, and freckled, and had a black eye. The voter glanced down at a slip of paper in his hand.

"Isadore Mendelheim," he said.

"That's not your real name and you know it!" said a suspicious challenger for a reform ticket.

"It is me name," said the repeater, "and I'm goin' to vote under it—see?"

From down the line came a voice:

"Don't let that guy bluff you, Casey. Soitinly your name is Mendelheim!"

Sure to See Him.

Mrs. Bilkins—Oh, goodie! Here's a letter from Cousin George.

Mr. Bilkins—Huh! Who cares for him?

Mrs. Bilkins—Eh? Why, he lives in Chicago, in one of its most delightful suburbs—Austin—and it's the very place for us to go next summer. I wrote him, telling him we were all just dying to see him and his lovely family. I wonder what he says. Read it; I'm too nervous.

Mr. Bilkins (reading)—"My Dear Cousin: You will soon have a chance to see us all once more. I have rented my house, and we shall make you a good long visit next summer."

No Consolation.

A friend of mine who is idiot enough to waste his substance in betting on horses recently returned home from a meeting oppressed by his want of luck. "I backed the favorite in a race," he said, "and a beast walked home at twenty to one."

"What time should he have walked home, pa?" inquired his bright little boy.

Talked to Sleep.

A distinguished theologian was invited to make an address before a Sunday school. The divine spoke for over an hour and his remarks were of too deep a character for the average juvenile mind to comprehend. At the conclusion, the superintendent, according to custom, requested some one in the school to name an appropriate hymn to be sung.

"Sing 'Revive Us Again,'" shouted a boy in the rear of the room.

Takes the Cake.

Senator Simmons was talking about a boom.

"I congratulated him on his boom," said the Senator, laughing, "and he appeared astonished that I knew anything of it. But I told him I had a keen nose for booms, even for little ones. I explained that I was like a New Bern urchin.

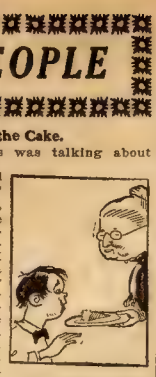
"A New Bern urchin used to call on a certain old lady every Saturday afternoon, and she would give him a piece of cocoanut layer cake. But one Saturday, as she expected company for tea, she decided not to cut the cake, and, therefore, none was offered to the urchin.

"He said plaintively, as the time came for him to go:

"'I believe I smell cocoanut layer cake.'

"The old lady laughed, went to the cupboard and cut him a very tiny slice. When she gave it to him he thanked her and said:

"'But it seems strange that I could smell such a little piece, doesn't it?'"



A Practical Little Wife.

Neighbor—You've got a lovely bedroom now, with this new carpet. Just put it down, didn't you?

Hostess—Yes; just through.

Neighbor—I thought so, from the tacks scattered around the floor. You ought to pick them up before night, or your husband will be stepping on them.

Hostess—No, let them stay. My husband is a newspaper humorist, and every time he steps on one, he'll think of some new joke about it. I hope he'll make enough out of them to pay for the carpet.

Hobson's Choice.

Russian Official—You cannot stay in this country.

Traveler—Then I'll leave it.

Russian Official—Have you a passport to leave?

Traveler—No.

Russian Official—Then you cannot leave. I will give you twenty-four hours to decide what you will do.

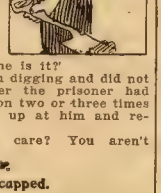
Purely Speculative.

"I have always been interested," said little Binks, "in the utilization of waste. Now, where do you suppose all these busted ties go in the end?"

"I don't know," said the genial philosopher, "but if they go where most people consign 'em there must be a terrible smell of rubber in the hereafter."

A Useless Question.

At a banquet given by the Lawyers' Association, former Judge James E. Purnell declared that the useless questions used by young lawyers in examining their first witnesses reminded him of the answer given to a convict.



"A street laborer," said Judge Purnell, "was digging just outside a State's prison. One of the convicts called out from his cell, 'Say, what time is it?'

"The man kept on digging and did not reply. Finally after the prisoner had repeated the question two or three times the laborer looked up at him and remarked:

"'What do you care? You aren't going any place.'"

Handicapped.

A one-armed referee recently had charge of a football match up North. A visitor fisted the ball, and a cry of "Foul!" resulted.

The referee, however, ignored the cry, and the match proceeded without interruption.

"Arrah!" yelled an Irishman in the crowd. "Leave him be, bhoys. How could the poor man see iverything wid only wan arrum?"

What He Drew.

"Did your uncle leave you anything in his will?"

"Only a new responsibility."

"What do you mean?"

"He left me an equity in a house he was buying on the installment plan and I've got to pay $30 a month for twenty years to win."

English Hair Grower

American Rights Secured for

New Drug CRYSTOLIS

Grows Hair an Inch Long in 30 Days —Stops Falling Hair, Dandruff and Itching Scalp—Restores Gray and Faded Hair to Natural Color and Brilliancy.

CUT OFF FREE COUPON AND MAIL TO-DAY

Why Wear Puffs, Pompadours, Rats and Braids of Filthy Chinese Hair When Crystolis Grows New Hair in 30 Days!

Here's good news for the man who vainly tries to plaster a few scanty locks over "that bald spot."

Good news for the woman whose hair is failing, whose locks are too scanty to properly pin up her false hair.

Good news for both men and women who find a hand full of hair in their comb every morning. For men and women growing gray before their time.

Good news for all with itching, burning, scalps, with dandruff, with any and all forms of hair and scalp trouble.

The Creslo Laboratories, 100 U street, Binghamton, N. Y., have secured the exclusive American rights for Crystolis, the famous English hair treatment.

Crystolis has been found to contain marvelous properties for producing a new growth of hair. In subjecting it to various tests in the worst cases of baldness, dandruff, itching scalp, etc., the results obtained by the experimenting chemists were considered almost miraculous.

In every case it was found that where there were any hair roots left it would produce a new and luxuriant growth of hair in from four to six weeks' time.

Gray or faded hair was often restored to its natural color in from 10 to 14 days' time. In minor cases of scalp and hair diseases, such as dandruff, falling hair, itching scalp, etc., it was found that these unnatural conditions were corrected and often completely cured by two or three applications.

Crystolis is a household word in Europe, where it is acclaimed "the most marvelous scientific discovery for promoting hair growth." It has won gold medals at Paris and Brussels.

Better yet it has won the warmest words of praise from those who have been fortunate enough to test its remarkable qualities.

Crystolis has been tried out in America for over a year now. Hundreds of men and women from every state unhesitatingly hail it as a true hair grower.

Here is a statement of just a few of those who have tried—who have been convinced—and who will swear to the virtues of this marvelous preparation:

Mr. Kelly of Memphis, bald for 30 years, says: "My head is now covered with hair nearly an inch long. friends simply astounded."

Mrs. Evans of Chicago writes: "Since using Crystolis can report new hair an inch long coming in thickly all over my head."

Mr. Mackin of St Louis reports: "One treatment made my hair two inches longer."

Mr. Morse of Boston declares: "I lost my hair eighteen years ago. Have used less than one treatment. My head is now entirely covered with a thick growth of hair of natural color. No more itching, no more falling hair, no more dandruff."

Mr. Boyd of Chicago says: "My bald spot was as shiny as a peeled onion. It is now all covered with thick new hair. The grayness is also disappearing."

Mr. Mourer of Cleveland declares: "Crystolis is the only thing which actually grows hair."

Mrs. Morris of Philadelphia writes after only three weeks' use: "I can see new hair in plenty and it is now a half inch long."

Lewis Nuff says: "New hair began to grow in ten days after beginning the treatment."

Mrs. Jackson of New York writes: "My hair stopped falling the first week. No more itching scalp and hair coming in fast."

Mr. Arnott of Cleveland reports: "Itching scalp stopped the second day, dandruff gone, no more falling hair."

Mrs. Rose of Rock Island writes: "Was almost wild for five years with itching scalp. Two or three applications of Crystolis stopped this. Now I have a fine new growth of hair."

You may be acquainted with some of these people or some of your friends may know them. Write us and we can give you the full address so that you can prove every statement.

But the best way to prove it without the risk of a penny, just what Crystolis will do in your own individual case, is to cut out the free coupon below and mail it today.

This invitation is open to bald headed people, wig wearers, to men and women with falling hair, prematurely gray hair, dry hair, brittle hair, stringy hair, greasy hair, matted hair, dandruff, itching scalp or any and all forms of scalp and hair trouble. Don't lay this paper aside until you have mailed the Free Coupon to the Creslo Laboratories, 100 U street, Binghamton, N Y. Write your name and address plainly

FREE COUPON

The Creslo Laboratories, 100 U street, Binghamton, N. Y.

I am a reader of The Chicago Ledger. Prove to me without expense that Crystolis stops falling hair, grows new hair, banishes dandruff and itching scalps and restores gray and faded hair to natural color. Write your name and address plainly and

PIN THIS COUPON TO YOUR LETTER.

The Rival Submarines;

Or, Close Play for a Million

By Weldon J. Cobb

[Copyright 1912 by W. D. Boyce Co.]
Begun in No. 28, July 13. Subscriptions can begin with that issue, or back copies can be obtained from news stands, our agents, or by mail from the office of publication.

CHAPTER IV.

A BIG CLEW.

I WAS cabin boy on the stolen submarine, the Ravager!"

Bob Archer, the boy detective, listened breathlessly to, this startling announcement. It was something more than a surprise. It was bewildering, sentient with the most vital significance and importance.

As the reader has seen, the present mission of the young sleuth was one of the strangest that had ever fallen to his lot. Power, influence, millions were behind him to assist in hunting down that direful menace to humanity and to commerce, the submarine boat, the Ravager, and its ill-omened commander, pirate, thief, and cutthroat—Red Rodrigo.

It was true that Bob had now secured possession of the only craft in the world that could hope to locate, pursue, and cope with that marvel of swiftness and force, the Ravager. Up to the present moment, however, it was a quest, a chase with a blind beginning.

And that quest, that chase meant the ransacking of the great oceans of the globe. Here today, there tomorrow, the boy detective had not the faintest shadow of a clew as to the whereabouts and hiding-places of the Ravager.

But now!

His eye glowed, his nerves tingled electrically, his ardent soul took hope. Here, unexpectedly, thrillingly, there had drifted into his path the one person in all the world, who could probably inform him credibly, reliably, as to the system and routes of the stolen submarine. Eagerly Bob Archer fixed his glance on the modest but spirited young chauffeur, who had already done him such signal service.

"You—you!" cried Bob. "The cabin boy of the Ravager?"

"Yes," replied Bert, simply.

"How can that be?"

"Why not?"

"I understand that this Red Rodridgo never allowed a man to leave the Ravager alive who once cast his lot in with its fortunes."

"That is true."

"Then you——"

"Escaped."

"When?"

"Six months ago."

"How long were you with the Ravager?"

"About a year."

"Then you know all about it?"

"Everything."

"What!" exclaimed Bob. "You could locate the Ravager?"

"Possibly. In fact, I have for several months made its final finding the one object of my life," declared Bert.

"What do you mean?"

"I will tell you briefly. I am an orphan—no home, no friends—a tramp, you might say. Nearly two years ago I was stranded in my travels at Buenos Aires, in South America. A sailor ran across me. His name was Blauvelt, but generally he was known as Six-fingered Francois."

"Why was that?"

"The forefinger on his right hand was once split by a cutlass stroke, and two pretty natural fingers grew where there had been one."

"I see."

"He offered me a job at great pay. I accepted it. Secretly and at night I was taken aboard the submarine, the Ravager. From the day I was engaged as cabin boy I was never allowed on shore."

"They treated you well?"

"Excellently. The boat was stocked with the luxuries of the season, constantly replenished. They went on mysterious missions in which dynamite was used. They brought people aboard as prisoners who secretly disappeared. They held high revel in the captain's cabin after long voyages, ending in the possession of vast hauls of money. I once heard Rodrigo say that he had a dozen little royal rulers under his thumb, who would protect and assist him if he got into trouble. One night, about a month before I escaped from the ship, they brought aboard a beautiful young girl. In some way I believe she was related to Rodridgo, but she regarded him with horror. That is her picture.

From an inside pocket Bert Noble brought to view an exquisite little porcelain medallion. He handed this to his companion. The boy detective gazed with interest and admiration at the profile of the most beautiful young girl he had ever seen.

"The name of the young lady is Hermione Consuelos. She was the daughter of a great Spanish grandee of Chile. He died. He left a very small fortune in money or property, but Rodridgo learned that in dying old Consuelos had imparted to his daughter a great secret. It referred to an immense treasure hidden on some desert island in the South Pacific. Rodridgo brought Hermione aboard the Ravager to force this secret from her. She refused to confess. I became a confidant and planned her escape and my own. The next day I learned that the Ravager had stopped at some point in the night, and that Hermione had been put on shore a prisoner in charge of some emissaries of Rodridgo."

"And since then?" interrogated Bob.

"I have had but one thought—to find and rescue the poor girl. She was placed in charge of Blauvelt and his wife, who went ashore with her. I escaped near the Chilean coast. A week later I was shot at on the streets of Lima. Then I knew that spies in the interest of Rodridgo were on my trail. I fled to Panama. Twice I was attacked on the street there. I went to Mexico. There I was poisoned. I came to the United States, hoping to have broken the trail, and planning to lie low until the scent was cold. A week ago I saw on the streets of the city where you hired me, near the garage where I was working, the man, Blauvelt. I had intended to leave there and go back to South America after taking you on this trip."

"Which you will do," declared Bob, promptly.

"In the Destroyer?"

"Yes."

"Excellent!"

"You are willing?"

"More than willing!" cried Bert, with glowing eyes.

Bob Archer seized the hand of his companion in a friendly grasp.

"Surely fate has brought you and me together, my friend," he said. "We each have a motive in locating the Ravager. There shall be no question as to the amount of compensation you require to join the expedition in search of the Ravager."

"I ask no compensation," replied Bert, quickly. "I wish only to find Hermione."

"Return to the hotel at the little town down the beach," directed Bob. "You and I have a great deal to talk about concerning the Ravager."

When they regained the hotel, it was arranged that Bob should send a note to his employers at the city garage, resigning from their employ. Bob gave him money to inclose in the letter, liberally covering hire charges and damage done to the automobile.

A man was employed to return the machine and deliver the letter. At the hotel Bob secured two rooms adjoining each other.

"Now, then, my friend," he said, as they seated themselves cozily after the arduous exertions of the night, "you and I are partners, so to speak, on this Ravager job. In a way, consider yourself an accredited agent of the United States Secret Service."

CHAPTER V.

KIDNAPED.

The cruise of the submarine Destroyer was to begin at once. So Bob Archer announced to his new friend and comrade, the morning following the rapid events of the momentous previous evening. Before the two went to bed that night there was a perfect understanding between them. The life of honest Bert Noble was an open book. The young detective was attracted by his simplicity and courage, his energy and candor.

Divested of his disguise, Bob presented to his friend a face nobody could help liking. To Bert the young sleuth was a hero. They parted that night each feeling that he had found a true friend and a desirable chum.

"I will have to go to the city to line up my forces," spoke Bob the next morning.

"Will you return soon?" inquired Bert.

"Within twenty-four hours. In the meantime keep close to the hotel. Your having seen this Blauvelt makes me fearful that he may be searching for, perhaps shadowing, you."

"I think not," answered Bert. "I am positive he did not see me. I hardly knew him when I saw him."

"When was that?"

"Two days ago."

"And where?"

"In a circus parade. I think he has come to this country, maybe cut loose from his old associations, got stranded and has taken up with his old calling."

"What was that?"

"Animal trainer."

"Well, rest up and look out for yourself while I am gone," urged Bob.

"I will," pledged Bert.

A more pleased and hopeful boy than the young chauffeur it would have been difficult to find. His sympathies had been deeply aroused by the misfortunes of Hermione Consuelos. Like himself, she was an orphan. He had planned to escape with her from the Ravager, and had failed. Then, when he was free himself, her forlorn, friendless condition had appealed to him. He had striven to aid her, but had found himself helpless, stranded in a foreign country, without friends, influence, or money.

Now a kind fate had placed him in cooperation with the representatives of the most powerful nation on earth. He was to become an active element in an exploit, full of daring and danger, but his brave heart never shrank from the ordeal. All the day he dreamed fondly of finding the beautiful captive girl and restoring her to friends and happiness.

Bert did not leave the hotel until toward evening, and then only for a brief stroll. He was returning to the hostelry, when the chauffeur of a taxi standing stationary at the curb challenged him with the words:

"Hey, there!"

Bert went up to the machine, and recognized the man he had hired the night before to return the auto to the city.

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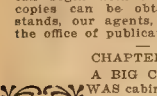
This $2 Aluminum 8 PIECE SET FREE



to your customers to help you introduce our BRAND NEW **FIVE PIECE SEWING SET** No one else has it. Extra low retail price will astonish you. Sells everywhere. No competition. Big profits. Whirlwind seller. **Best Agent's Proposition Ever** offered. Listen. Bagley took 183 orders in 11 hours. Lightody averaged $2 an hour profit. Lloyd sold 90 out of first 110 calls. Clean Sweep. Golden opportunity for workers. Write today. **Peoples Supply Co., B86, Kansas City, Mo.**

Pure Aluminum Spoons Size 6-in. one 10-in. one 11-in.

MY New Census Business Guide, fastest selling book on earth. Agents making $10.00 daily. Outfit free. Prof. Nichols, Dept. B. L., Naperville, Ill.

AGENTS WANTED for quick selling household necessity. Good for canvassing fairs or street men. Send for circular. Sample 10c. CHAMPION CO., D1, GENEVA, OHIO

DON'T ACCEPT an agency until you get my samples and particulars. MONEY MAKERS Address SAYMAN 804 Sayman Building, St. Louis Mo.

AGENTS PORTRAITS 35c, FRAMES 15c. Sheet Pictures 1c. Stereoscopes 25c. Views 1c. 30 days' credit. *Samples and catalog free.* Consolidated Portrait Co., Dept. 5017, 1027 W.Adams St. Chicago

AGENTS Are coining money selling Boyers "Sani-soles." Guaranteed to cure SMELLING, SWEATY, ACHING FEET or money back. If you really want to make big money write us to-day. BOYER LAST. CO., 8 E. Eighteen St., Chicago

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NEW PATENTED LOCKSTITCH AWL

Sews Shoes, Harness, Buggy Tops, Canvas, Grain Bags, Anything. Sells at sight. Astonishing low price to agents. Big profits. To show it means a sale. We want a few good, live hustlers in each county. Splendid opportunity to make big money. No experience needed. Write quick—now—for terms. A postal will do. Send no money. A. MATHEWS, 5017 Wayne Street, DAYTON, OHIO

AGENTS!

Become partners in our business through our profit-sharing plan. Sell "Brandt's Antiseptic Stropper," It hones and sharpens your razor better than an expert barber. Works automatically for old-style razors and safety blades. Anyone can use it. Guaranteed for life. Our profit sharing plan and our premiums make this the greatest agency proposition. Write quick for prices and territory. A. T. Brandt Mfg Co., 49 Hudson St., New York

AGENTS

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J. C. BROWN KILE, PA.

BIG MAIL FREE!

Would you like to get a lot of letters, circulars and packages? You probably know that manufacturers, supply houses, wholesalers and publishers buy names and addresses for the purpose of sending samples, advertising matter, papers and circulars to. Good names and addresses are hard to get and are quite expensive.

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We have been publishing the Agents' Directory List for several years and refer to the editor of this paper who will tell you we are reliable. All we ask is that you send 10 cents in silver and we will enter your name in our Agents' Directory List as above stated. Write today. Address

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The Easy Way to Riches

Don't sweat and grind your life away for a bare living—get this free suit and easy money. Our suits sell like hotcakes for $3 to $10 less than other houses. Better tailoring, better proposition, better guarantee. A letter or postal brings everything—samples, fashion plates, tape measure, instructions, etc. This is a gold mine for you. And, remember, it's all free.

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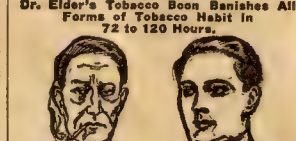
One of our swell suits on your back will sell scores of others. Backed by our experience and money, you are bound to succeed. Our made-to-order suits and pants sell like wildfire. You don't have to be a salesman. You don't need to be a judge of clothing. No experience necessary—we teach you.

ACT NOW! If you want to succeed, wear fine clothes and hear the jingle of the coin in your pocket, write for our big free offer. Your ONE big chance! Start your letter off NOW—this very minute. We Prepay Express Charges. Every garment a union-made product and bears the *union label.*

REGAL TAILORING CO., 701 Regal Bldg., CHICAGO, ILL.

Tobacco Habit Banished

Dr. Elder's Tobacco Boon Banishes All Forms of Tobacco Habit in 72 to 120 Hours.



"What Tobacco Boon Will Do."

A positive and quick relief. A Home Treatment easy to take. S. E. Addington, of Bethel, Okla., writes: "Your Tobacco Boon has cured me after using tobacco 84 years." H. E. Evans, of Meridian, Miss., writes: "I had been a heavy chewer for 54 years. After taking your treatment 5 days I was completely cured." Adolph Erigen, of Pigeon Falls, Wis., writes: "I would not take $1,000 for what good your Tobacco Boon did me." Hundreds of similar letters from satisfied patients.

REMEMBER—We give a legal binding Guarantee of results in every case or money refunded.

FREE BOOK on Tobacco Habit also Home Treatment will be mailed free in plain package to any one. Do not wait—send name and address TODAY.

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A Cleanser and Mouth Wash In One

Combines the virtues of pastes, powders, washes—without the faults of either. It cleanses and polishes the teeth without possibility of abrasion, while its fragrant, antiseptic foam reaches every part of the mouth, destroying pernicious bacteria, insuring healthy gums and a sweet breath. Comes in handy metal box—a convenient cake that lasts for months. 25 cents at all druggists—or direct.

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(Also called Tetter, Salt Rheum, Pruritus, Milk-Crust, Weeping Skin, etc.)

ECZEMA CAN BE CURED TO STAY, and when I say cured, I mean just what I say—C-U-R-E-D, and not merely patched up for awhile, to return worse than before. Remember I make this broad statement after putting ten years of my time on this one disease and handling in the mean-time a quarter of a million cases of this dreadful disease. Now, I do not care what all you have used, nor how many doctors have told you that you could not be cured—all I ask is just a chance to show you that I know what I am talking about. If you will write me TO-DAY, I will send you a FREE TRIAL of my mild, soothing, guaranteed cure that will convince you more in a day than I or anyone else could in a month's time. If you are disgusted and discouraged, I dare you to give me a chance to prove my claims. By writing me to-day you will enjoy more real comfort than you ever thought this world holds for you. Just try it and you will see I am telling you the truth.

Dr. J. E. Cannaday, 1417 Park Square, Sedalia, Mo.

References: Third National Bank, Sedalia, Mo.

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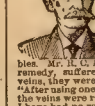
DON'T CUT OUT VARICOSE VEINS

But reduce them, stop pain and inflammation with

ABSORBINE JR.



A mild, safe, antiseptic, discutient, herbal liniment and a proven remedy for this and similar troubles. Mr. H. C. Kellogg, Bocket, Mass., before using this remedy, suffered intensely with painful and inflamed veins, they were swollen, knotted and hard. He writes. "After using one and one-half bottles of ABSORBINE, JR., the veins were reduced, inflammation and pain gone, and I have had no recurrence of the trouble during the past six years." It allays pain in Boils, Painful Swellings, Hydrocele, Varicocele, Bruises, "Black and Blue" discolorations, etc., in a pleasant manner. Book 7 F free. Price $1.00 a-oz., $2.00 per bottle at druggists or delivered. W. F. YOUNG, P. D. F., 337 Temple St., Springfield, Mass.

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$100 Monthly and expenses to trustworthy men and women to travel and distribute samples; big manufacturer. Steady work. B. Schaffer, Treas. G. W., Chicago

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MAKE IT AT HOME The finest drink you ever tasted, Geiger's Orangeola. Send 10 cents for package which makes a gallon. Simply add water and sugar. Over four cents profit on every glass if you sell it. Send 10 cents now. J. H. GEIGER, 1528 S. Troy Street, Chicago, Ill.

One lad with a slingshot tried to hit the nearest floating globe. It sailed gracefully out over the water, however, untouched.

The second balloon was limp and flabby from exhausting gas. It sank into the water near to the beach line. A venturesome lad, with an exultant shout, waded out after it and seized it, all soaked and dripping with water.

"I got it!" he shouted, but half a dozen companions instantly pounced upon him. The tender rubber sphere was torn into a hundred pieces.

Bob, idly watching these maneuvers, while resting and thinking, had noticed that from each of the balloons a little piece of thread a few feet in length hung down. Again, at the end of each string was a card. That attached to the submerged balloon was trodden under foot in the scrimmage of the youngsters. As they dashed off in pursuit of half a dozen other balloons, now appearing in sight aloft, the card on the beach flew directly toward the automobile.

The young sleuth was used to noting and investigating all incidents coming under his observation. He stepped from the auto and picked up the trampled card.

"Some aerial advertisement, I fancy," he soliloquized. "Hello! hello! hello!"

The young detective had a finely modeled mind. He was trained to suppress all exhibitions of emotion in a vocation where nerve and self-control were the ruling requisites. In the present instance, however, he repeated the three words given in three gradually ascending intonations of surprise and vivid conjecture.

The card he had by chance picked up had been trampled and torn, but sufficient of the printing on its face remained intact to show a name and an address. The name was that of the garage company, for which Bert Noble had worked. The address was the city where Bob had engaged the machine and chauffeur the night of the wild dash to intercept Professor Edison. Bert had handed Bob one of these cards when they started on their ride. In one corner of both cards the initials were present: "B. N."

"Why," mused the boy detective, "this card belonged to Bert Noble. All those other balloons have trailing cards attached to them, too. What does it mean?"

Bob turned over the card. His attention became still more riveted immediately, the card had borne writing, an indelible purple pencil had scrawled some words upon it, but the contact with water and muddy sand had obliterated all coherency.

"It is easily guessed out," said Bob to himself, "that Bert Noble is a prisoner. In some way he has managed to get hold of these balloons. He has sent them adrift, each bearing a message. Ah!"

Bob jumped into the auto and sent it spinning down the beach. His eyes were fixed upon another, apparently the last of the toy balloons. The crowd of boys were chasing it. Some of them were throwing stones at it, for it was sailing low.

Suddenly one of the lads with a bow and arrow took aim at the slowly flying globe. A great yell of delight and triumph went up from the juvenile mob as the arrow struck the balloon, pierced it, and it collapsed and came tumbling to the ground.

Bob stopped the machine, leaped out, and arrived at the group just in time to rescue from under their feet the card attached to the string pendant from the balloon. Some wet mud, a heel mark, a tear—these had partially obliterated the words the card had held originally. Still, Bob was able to make out the words: "Prisoner—lion's cage—word to Bayview Hotel—reward—ask Mr. Archer." The remainder was blurred out.

For some moments Bob studied this disjointed and incoherent jumble over and over. A glowing light came into his eyes as he studied the puzzling enigma.

"I think I understand," he said slowly to himself, folding up the card, putting it in his pocket, and resuming his place in the automobile.

Bob drove to the nearest town. All the way along the route, here and there on trees and sign posts, he noted advertisements of a circus at a county seat named Westville.

It was quite late in the afternoon when Bob reached that town. He took the auto to a garage, got a meal, and proceeded to the circus grounds. The words "lion's cage," in the card message, coupled with the recollection that Bert Noble had seen his enemy and trailer, Blauvelt, in a circus procession in this same district, had at once enlightened the shrewd young detective.

"You take me to that baggage tent."

Bob felt certain that Bert had been kidnaped by Blauvelt, and was now a captive in the hands of that person or some of his confederates. He was further positive that these individuals had some connection with the circus.

The young sleuth quietly but persistently proceeded to make his surface investigations. He made a slight change in his disguise, and went around among the candy butchers and hangers-on of the big show. He learned considerable. Not so much, however, until he came across a man selling little toy whips with whistles on the handles. The peddler was seated near a band wagon, resting and waiting for the circus to be out, so that he could offer his wares to the dispersing crowds.

Bob stepped up to the stand where the peddler had his goods displayed. He took up half a dozen of the whips.

"How much?" he asked.

"Sixty cents," replied the peddler, and he brightened up at so liberal a sale.

"Business pretty good?" inquired Bob, casually.

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The PLATELESS DAYDARK

Will earn you

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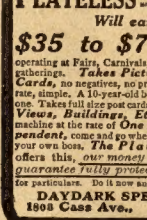

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Shipped with a supply of 10-inch double disc records of your selection, so you can enjoy the finest entertainments for one whole month. Return the outfit AT OUR EXPENSE if for any reason you do not wish to keep it. Drop a postal for our big list of unsolicited testimonials, record book and other literature. They are free.

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Now look here, Mr. and Mrs. Spectacle-wearer!

You are about the only solitary weak-eyed human being in your county who has not yet commenced using my wonderful "Perfect Vision" glasses—and I am therefore going to do everything in my power to get you to give them just one trial.

You see, I have absolute confidence that just one tryout on your part will make you a permanent booster for my famous "Perfect Vision" spectacles, and I am therefore going to send you a pair of my latest improved glasses absolutely free of charge.

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—Because these "Perfect Vision" glasses of mine will enable you to read the very finest print in your Bible, thread the smallest-eyed needle, shoot the smallest bird off the tallest tree-top, distinguish a horse from a cow as far as the eye can reach, and at the same time they will be actually protecting and preserving your eyes and keep them from getting weaker while using it.—

Now you certainly do want a pair of these wonderful "Perfect Vision" glasses, and I surely want to give you a pair absolutely free—without even asking you to pay me one penny for them, now and never.

So let's get together right now on this very generous advertising proposition.

You, on your part, just write me your name and address at once—and I, to fulfill my part of the contract, will immediately mail you my Perfect Home Eye Tester and a four-dollar cash certificate entitling you, absolutely free of charge, to a brand new pair of my wonderful "Perfect Vision" glasses, which will again enable you to enjoy your reading, sewing and hunting just as much as you ever did in your younger days. Address:—

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Over 165,000 customers have proven that our whiskey is far the best ever distilled. For smoothness and mellowness of flavor it cannot be equalled. Send remittance with order. Money refunded if whiskey is not perfectly satisfactory. Order today.

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"Oh, only fair," drawled the man. "These whips don't go as good as they used to. It's the balloons I make my money on."

"Oh, balloons, eh?"

"Yes."

"Got any?" queried Bob, looking around.

"I should say I hadn't!" replied the peddler, looking disconsolate. "Just think of it—two hundred of them. Last night I put them in the old open baggage tent. There was nothing but an old cage wagon there, and some trumpery. I tied the lot to one of the wheels. Left them there for the night."

"And then?" insinuated Bob, pricking up his ears and guessing what was coming.

The man made a despairing gesture with both hands toward the sky.

"When I started for the circus, he related, I saw about fifty of the balloons go up through the open top of the tent. You bet I ran! Then, before I reached the circus grounds, about one hundred and fifty more in one bunch went up."

"Why, how was that?" asked Bob, interestedly.

"In don't know. I ran into the tent. The balloons were gone—who set them free I can't guess. There was a man in charge of the tent, who said no one had gone into it this morning. He said there was a sick lion in the cage wagon, and he had orders to keep the hands out. Just think of it—twenty dollars out of pocket!"

"What did the balloons cost you, my man?" inquired Bob.

"Five dollars."

Bob took out a bank-note of that amount and extended it toward the peddler.

"See here," he said, "you take me to that baggage tent and the cage wagon, and that money is yours."

The man eyed the bill covetously, but shook his head in a dismally despondent way.

"What's the matter?" asked Bob.

"The baggage tent has been taken down and sent on to the next town."

"But the cage wagon."

"Gone, too."

"Oh, to where they show next?"

"No, not the wagon—some one bought that. It wasn't in very good shape. They said the lion had died, and about three hours ago some horses drew the wagon away. I know it isn't going to come back to the circus."

"How do you know that?"

"Because they took that west road leading out of the town, and the next show town is east of here."

"I see," said Bob thoughtfully. "Here, my man, I'll give you the five dollars, anyway."

The peddler acted greatly pleased. Then he eyed Bob keenly.

"Say," he said, "I'm mum, close-mouthed, but you ain't asking all these questions about that cage for nothing. I'll say this: I don't believe there was any sick lion in the cage wagon."

"Thank you," said Bob, and started off to locate the west road.

Within an hour the young detective was on the trail of the cage wagon. He did not call in the police assistance he might have commanded, and he proceeded on foot on his expedition. He was not positive that his chase of the cage wagon would lead to the results he hoped for, but he considered it too good a clew to neglect.

The trail led out of town. Bob had made inquiries, and now he hurried his steps, knowing that the wagon could not be more than a mile ahead of him on a lonely country road. Dusk had grown into the more somber evening shades as he came upon his quarry.

The cage wagon had been driven into a little thicket, and the horses were feeding. Near by was a fire of twigs and dead wood. Before it were two rough-looking fellows. They had unpacked a lunch, and were eating it and resting.

Bob got around to the spot where the wagon stood. It was about twenty feet from the campfire. The young detective from the shelter of a bush scanned it closely. The reflection from the fire enabled a critical inspection.

The vehicle was battered and weather-worn, but heavily built, and every solid wooden screen over the bars, was bolted into place and secured by large padlocks. Bob looked it over critically. Then he fancied he had discovered a vulnerable point of assault.

Extending down under the wagon from the floor of the cage was a six-inch chute. Its cover was tightly locked on the outside with hook and staple. This was used to empty refuse from the cage. Bob crept close to the wagon. Then he was under it. He handled the hook noiselessly, dropped the chute cover with agility and deftly lifted himself up into the cage.

The boy detective was in doubt as to what he was about to face—emptiness, man, or savage beast—as he poised on the floor of the big cage wagon, challenging the baffling darkness, revolver in hand, ear alert, every nerve strained to meet and combat what might come.

This thrilling story of youthful struggles and adventures will be continued in the next issue of the Ledger. A lot of strange and exciting things happen. Read it. If you are not already a subscriber for this paper, it will repay you if you send in a year's subscription. It costs only $1.00, and you will never regret it. Let us hear from you at once.

* * *

A fussy wife says the most annoying thing next to a man in the house is a fly.

Money Not Everything.

"Why does your father object to me?" "Because you have no money," faltered the girl.

"Money isn't everything. I know a couple that started housekeeping on tobacco coupons alone."

Remarkable Home Treatment For All Foot Troubles

This information will be welcomed by the thousands of victims of daily foot torture. Don't waste time. Get it at once. No matter how many patent medicines you have tried in vain this treatment, which was formerly known only to doctors, will do the work. Dissolve two tablespoonfuls of Calocide compound in a basin of warm water. Soak the feet for full fifteen minutes, gently rubbing the sore parts. The effects are marvelous. All pain goes instantly and the feet feel simply delightful. Corns and callouses can be peeled right off; buntons, aching feet, sweaty smelling feet, get immediate relief. Use this treatment a week and your foot troubles will be a thing of the past. Calocide works through the pores and removes the cause. Get a twenty-five cent box from any druggist, usually enough to cure the worst feet.

This Handsome Brass Clock FREE!

THE NEWEST —AND— BEST OFFER

This handsome brass clock is a time meter that will grace your table or mantel piece with beauty and adornment. It is made of brass with the brush brass finish. The dial is plain white and, as you see, the hands are gracefully designed to point to the hours and minutes in the plainest manner. The glass covering the dial is beveled and thick so that it can stand rough handling. The works are especially imported and have a thirty-two hour movement, that is, it needs to be wound only once in thirty-two hours.

The stands holding the clock up are also of brass, secure and very strong. In the back the winding and setting screws are well made and are large enough so that your fingers can reach them. The whole clock is designed to combine the best time keeping in the neatest and most compact form possible. But, above all—

WE ABSOLUTELY GUARANTEE IT

against defects, for this clock is thoroughly tested, examined and regulated before it leaves the factory, and if there are any defects in the material and workmanship, you can return it at once at our expense.

It will look well on your mantel-piece or on your table among your best things. Hour after hour, year after year it faithfully performs its duty of telling you the correct time.

With this little mountain of dependability you will be on time for your appointments and always have a standard time-piece in your house for your whole family to set their watches by.

This is, indeed the most beautiful and valuable premium we have offered, and this offer will appeal to thousands of our readers, for this clock is **absolutely free.**

Read Below How to Get the Clock Free, and get it at once, for we are able to make this big offer only through a lucky purchase and the supply is limited.

How to Get the Beautiful Brass Clock Free

There are four ways to get this clock FREE. The first way is to send us $2.00 for a year's subscription to The Saturday Blade and Chicago Ledger together, and on receipt of your subscription, we will send you this handsome brass clock free, all charges prepaid.

The second way is: If you prefer either one of these great papers for yourself get some friend to send their subscription to either one of the papers along with yours and send us the $2.00, and we will send you the clock absolutely free, all charges prepaid. Of course, your friend would not be entitled to the clock, but the good value of the Blade and Ledger should appeal enough to induce your friend to give you the subscription.

The third way is, if any of your friends do not wish to subscribe for the paper for a whole year, you may send in two six-months' subscriptions along with your yearly subscription and we will send the clock to you all charges prepaid.

The fourth way is, if you do not know some friend who is willing to send a subscription to either the Blade or Ledger along with yours send your own subscription for the paper that you want for two years.

We Treat Old and New Subscribers Alike on This Offer.

If you are already a subscriber to the Blade and Ledger send us $2.00 and we will renew your subscription for one year from the time it expires. If you only take one of the papers and do not care to take the other send us $2.00 to renew your subscription for two years, and we will send the clock.

Don't fail to take advantage of this offer, for it is one of the **best offers** made. You will realize when you get the clock what a beautiful time piece it is.

With your order just say you want the Brass Clock.

SUBSCRIPTION DEPARTMENT, W. D. BOYCE CO.,
500 Dearborn Avenue, Chicago, Ill.

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The Fairy Corner

TEA WITH GRANDMA.

Samantha Anne and Mary Lee
Were asked by grandma out to tea.
When they arrived, dressed in their best,
They found dear grandma at her rest.
"Oh, never mind," said Mary Lee,
"We'll just sit down alone to tea;
We're hungry and can't wait," said she.

So down they sat, the hungry dears;
And pretty soon their grandma hears
The dishes clinking on the tray,
While "Mary, sugar-cream," they say.
"I haven't tasted buns in years,"
Is what the resting grandma hears.
"Please pass the jam." Thus say the dears.

"Pray, ladies, won't you stay awhile?"
Cries grandma, coming with a smile.
"I'm very rude to be a-snooze
And all this pleasant party lose.
Remove your hats and coats, I pray,
And make yourselves at home today."
Said Anne, "We haven't long to stay."

Right of Way.

Bears growl almost as much as a youngster who is told that he is not to have any dinner unless he washes his face properly. Bears are often just as disagreeable as their growls. One that used to live in West Virginia was that sort of bear.

A train on the Western Maryland Railroad was running slowly because it was going through a deep cut and around a curve at the same time. Suddenly the brakes went on with a jerk. The engineer had seen something on the track ahead, and that something was a large black bear.

Mrs. Bear was quiet, content to stay where she was, since she could climb the side of the cut, and she loped along ahead of the train, looking back to see what was happening. The engineer could not stop soon enough, and the cowcatcher gave the bear a hard bump and shoved her along the track, much to the loss of her temper and dignity.

When the engine stopped and the driver and fireman got down to chase away the beast Mrs. Bear was looking for revenge. She growled like a dog who has been teased and does not care about making up and being friends again, and she went for the two men so fast that they got back into their engine cab in two jumps and a half. She held the battlefield alone until somebody got a revolver and shot her.

Treasure From the Sea.

Boys that live at Pine Brook, N. J., did not know that there was a buried treasure near at hand or they might have gone hunting for it. For probably seven years the treasure had been lying at the bottom of the Rockaway River, near Pine Brook. It was not especially valuable treasure, but it was good enough now that pirates do not sail the Spanish main any longer.

Two fishermen found it. A strong line, much larger than you have ever used unless you have gone fishing for whale or something of that sort, was caught in the bottom of the river. The men tugged on it and found that it gave a little, and just then an automobile came along the road. The men asked the automobile man to give them a little assistance, and they tied the line to the rear axle and let the car pull on it. The line strained and slowly moved out of the water, drawing with it a wrecked canoe full of mud and stones. In the canoe was found a heavy chest, which was removed by the men and loaded into the car, and then the driver and fishermen went on to town. There they displayed the find, and the chest was recognized as the silverware box belonging to a hotel. The box had been stolen in 1904, and no trace of the robbers had been found. It is supposed that they sunk the chest in the canoe, intending to return for it later.

A Hungry Motor Car.

Have you ever noticed how hungry an automobile sometimes looks when it is trying to run you down on the street? It looks as if it would like to eat you and leave nothing except the buttons. That may have been the feeling of the motor car that got in the path of a runaway in Kalamazoo. The runaway was composed of two frightened horses and a loaded pie wagon, which may or may not have been frightened. The driver was thrown off the wagon seat, and the horses dragged the swaying pie wagon through the street, dripping pies behind. They ran into an automobile, and the wagon suddenly stopped, but the pies went straight on and plastered themselves all over the car. The car was spotted with red cherry and purple raspberry and blue huckleberry and brown apple and yellow lemon pie filling until it looked like a horse on a merry-go-round or in a Noah's ark.

Skeptic Defined.

Tommy—Pop, what is a skeptic?

Tommy's Pop—A skeptic, my son, is a person who would look for the wishbone in a soft-boiled egg.

LET US MAKE YOU FAT

50-Cent Box Free!

We Will Prove at Our Own Expense That It Is No Longer Necessary to Be Thin, Scrawny and Undeveloped.

WE INVITE EVERY THIN MAN and WOMAN HERE

Every Reader of The Chicago Ledger Who is Run Down, Nervous or Underweight, to Get Fat at Our Expense.

"Gee! Look at that pair of skinny scarecrows! Why don't they try Sargol?"

This is a generous offer to every thin man or woman reader of The Chicago Ledger. We positively guarantee to increase your weight to your own satisfaction or no pay. Think this over—think what it means. At our own risk, we offer to put 10, 15, yes, 30 pounds of good, solid "stay there" flesh on your bones, to fill out hollows in cheeks, neck or bust, to get rid of that "peaked" look, to rejuvenate and revitalize your whole body until it tingles with vibrant energy; to do this without drastic diet, "tonics," severe physical culture "stunts," detention from business or any irksome requirements—if we fail it costs you nothing.

We particularly wish to hear from the excessively thin, those who know the humiliation and embarrassment which only skinny people have to suffer in silence. We want to send a free 50-cent package of our new discovery to the people who are called "slats" and "bean poles," to bony women, whose clothes never look "anyhow," no matter how expensively dressed, to the skinny men who fail to gain social or business recognition on account of their starved appearance. We care not whether you have been thin from birth, whether you have lost flesh through sickness, how many flesh builders you have experimented with. We take the risk and assume it cheerfully. If we can not put pounds and pounds of healthy flesh on your frame we don't want your money.

How can we do this? We will tell you. Science has discovered a remarkable concentrated treatment which increases cell growth, the very substance of which our bodies are made—a treatment that makes indigestion and other stomach troubles disappear as if by magic and makes an old dyspeptic or a sufferer from weak nerves or lack of vitality feel like a 2-year-old. This new treatment which has proved a boon to every thin person, is called **Sargol.** Don't forget the name—"S-A-R-G-O-L." Nothing like it has ever been produced before. It is a revelation to women who have never been able to appear stylish in anything they wore because of their thinness. It is a godsend to every man who is under weight or is lacking in nerve force or energy. If you want a beautiful and well-rounded figure of symmetrical proportions, of which you can feel justly proud—if you want a body full of throbbing life and energy, write The Sargol Company, 100-U Herald Building, Binghamton, N. Y., to-day, and we will send you, absolutely free, a 50c. box of Sargol that will prove all we claim. Take one with every meal, and in five minutes after you take the first concentrated tablet of this precious product it will commence to unfold its virtues, and it has by actual demonstration often increased the weight at the rate of one pound a day. But you say you want proof. Well, here you are. Here is the statement of those who have tried—who have been convinced—and who will swear to the virtues of this marvelous preparation:

WHAT SARGOL HAS DONE FOR OTHERS

When we mail you the Free 50-cent package of Sargol, we will send you copies of letters received from grateful patrons, reporting actual gains in solid healthy permanent flesh, of from ten to over thirty pounds.

We give here a few interesting figures from reports which are being received daily.

REV. GEORGE W. DAVIS says:
"I have made a faithful trial of the Sargol treatment and must say it has brought to me new life and vigor. I have gained twenty pounds and now weigh 170 pounds, and what is better, I have gained the days of my boyhood. It has been the turning point of my life. My health is now fine. I don't have to take any medicine at all and never want to again."

MRS. A. I. RODENHEISER writes:
"I have gained immensely since I took Sargol, for I only weighed about 106 pounds when I began using it and now I weigh 130 pounds, so really this makes 24 pounds. I feel stronger and am looking better than ever before, and now I carry rosy cheeks, which is something I could never say before.
"My old friends who have been used to seeing me with a thin, long face, say that I am looking better than they have ever seen me before, and father and mother are so well pleased to think I have got to look so well and weigh so heavy for me."

F. GAGNON writes:
"Here is my report since taking the Sargol treatment. I am a man 67 years of age and was all run down to the very bottom. I had to quit work as I was so weak. Now, thanks to Sargol, I look like a new man. I gained 22 pounds with 28 days' treatment. I cannot tell you how happy I feel. All my clothes are getting too tight. My face has a good color and I never was so happy in my life."

C E. Crouner gained	**15**	**lbs. in**	**30**	**days.**
Thomas Davis	"	10	"	16 "
Leonore Patton	"	16	"	30 "
Mrs. Seim	"	13	"	20 "
Mrs. A. Arnott	"	10	"	40 "
F. A. Myrick	"	20	"	30 "
Philip Drapeau	"	9	"	30 "
Mrs. S. E. Murray	"	30	"	40 "
Mary Bland	"	18	"	40 "
W. W. Allis	"	36	"	50 "
Wm. Carmichael	"	5	"	10 "
Arthur Stewart	"	5	"	12 "
Mrs. C. Craig	"	13	"	30 "
Mrs. N. Galliger	"	18	"	35 "

Send to day for our free 50-cent package and let us prove that

SARGOL SHOULD DO THE SAME FOR YOU

This treatment increases the red corpuscles in the blood, strengthens the nerves and puts the digestive tract into such shape that your food is assimilated and turned into good, solid, healthy flesh instead of passing through the system undigested and unassimilated. It is a thoroughly scientific principle, this Sargol, and builds up the thin, weak and debilitated without any nauseous dosing. In many conditions it is better than cod liver oil and certainly is much pleasanter to take.

Send for the 50-cent box today. Convince us by your prompt acceptance of this offer that you are writing in good faith and really desire to gain in weight. The 50-cent package which we will send you free will be an eye-opener to you. We send it that you may see the simple, harmless nature of our new discovery, how easy it is to take, how you gain flesh privately without knowledge of friends or family until you astonish them by the prompt and unmistakable results.

We could not publish this offer in The Chicago Ledger if we were not prepared to live up to it. It is only the astounding results of our new method of treatment that make such an offer and such a guarantee possible on our part. So cut off the coupon today and mail it at once to The Sargol Company, 100-U Herald Bldg., Binghamton, N. Y., and please inclose 10c with your letter to help pay distribution expenses. Take our word, you'll never regret it.

FREE COUPON

COME EAT WITH US AT OUR EXPENSE

This coupon entitles any thin person to one 50c. package of Sargol, the concentrated Flesh Builder (provided you have never tried it), and that 10c. is enclosed to cover postage, packing, etc. Read our advertisement printed above, and then put 10c. in stamps in letter to-day, with this coupon, and the full 50c. package will be sent to you by return of post. Address: The Sargol Company, 100-U, Herald Bldg., Binghamton, N. Y. Write your name and address plainly, and

PIN THIS COUPON TO YOUR LETTER.